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# THE ART OF BEING HAPPY



Edited by

SAMUEL G. KLING

and

ESTHER B. KLING



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AND

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## FOREWORD

WHAT IS HAPPINESS? How can it be achieved? Since the beginning of time man has sought this goal.

The answers, of course, have not all been the same. Reflecting diverse experiences and personalities, men have achieved happiness through seemingly different paths. Some thought happiness was impossible without virtue or wisdom. Others believed it came only through identification with God. Still others considered that to obtain happiness one must reduce one's desires and learn the art of moderation.

But whatever the path, there is general agreement that happiness must come from within; that it is not dependent upon external things. The miser who spends his life greedily acquiring wealth is not a happy man. Nor is he who makes a fetish of acquiring power or fame. All too often such acquisitive individuals find that success is bitter and fortune illusory, and that peace of mind and spiritual well being are as remote as ever.

The tragic fact, indeed, is that so many people never achieve happiness at all. Unhappy in their jobs, their marriages and in their relationships with others, they are haunted by the ghosts of the past and stand in morbid dread of the future yet to come.

And yet it is not too much to hope that happiness can be achieved. We can be helped on our way by the intelligent guidance of sympathetic and understanding counselors. That is what this book aims to provide. Here, then, are fifty-six philosophers and poets, scientists and statesmen, writers and religionists to serve as guides and point the way. This book, we believe, will help resolve doubts, dispel perplexities and contribute toward making life richer and more meaningful by offering the best and most practical advice on how to be happy.

In gathering the material we have sifted practically all that has been

written on the subject. There were four tests to determine the usability of a given selection. One was the test of practicality. Was the writer helpful with concrete advice and suggestions? Did he also have something of importance to say to those who, though not actually unhappy, stood in need of spiritual nourishment? Thirdly, was what the writer had to say readable and interesting? If the selection met these three tests there was still a final hurdle: was the author of sufficient prominence for his words to carry weight?

Not all of the material we read met these high standards. Some of it was almost entirely speculative and theoretical. Much was dull, even when it contained a few useful suggestions. These we have zealously tried to eliminate.

The final result is *THE ART OF BEING HAPPY*. If this book helps the reader find his own road to happiness, it will have fulfilled the aims and hopes of the editors.

S.G.K.

E.B.K.

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# THE ART OF BEING HAPPY



\*❖\*❖\*❖\*  
*Joy in Living*  
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CHARLES W. ELIOT, 1834-1926

American educator, president of Harvard University and editor of the famous *Harvard Classics*

It is, THEN, in spite of many old and some new discouragements that we are all seeking the happy life. We know that education spreads, knowledge grows, and public liberty develops; but can we be sure that public and private happiness increase? What the means and sources of happiness are in this actual world, with our present surroundings and with no reference to joys or sorrows in any other world, is a natural, timely, and wholesome inquiry. We may be sure that one principle will hold throughout the whole pursuit of thoughtful happiness,—the principle that the best way to secure future happiness is to be as happy as is rightfully possible today. To secure any desirable capacity for the future, near or remote, cultivate it today. What would be the use of immortality for a person who cannot use well half an hour? asks Emerson.

In trying to enumerate the positive satisfactions which an average man may reasonably expect to enjoy in this world, I of course take no account of those too common objects of human pursuit,—wealth, power, and fame; first, because they do not as a rule contribute to happiness; and secondly, because they are unattainable by mankind in general. I invite you to consider only those means of happiness which the humble and obscure millions may possess. The rich and famous are too few to affect appreciably the sum of human happiness. I begin with satisfactions of sense.

Sensuous pleasures, like eating and drinking, are sometimes described

From *The Happy Life* by Charles W. Eliot. Reprinted by permission of Samuel A. Eliot.

as animal, and therefore unworthy. It must be confessed, however, that men are, in this life, animals all through,—whatever else they may be,—and that they have a right to enjoy without reproach those pleasures of animal existence which maintain health, strength, and life itself. Familiar ascetic and pessimistic dogmas to the contrary notwithstanding, these pleasures, taken naturally and in moderation, are all pure, honorable, and wholesome. Moreover, all attempts to draw a line between bodily satisfactions on the one hand, and mental or spiritual satisfactions on the other, and to distinguish the first as beastly indulgences, and the second as the only pleasures worthy of a rational being, have failed, and must fail; for it is manifestly impossible to draw a sharp line of division between pleasures, and to say that these are bodily, and those intellectual or moral. Are the pleasures of sight and hearing bodily or mental? Is delight in harmony or in color a pleasure of the sense, or of the imagination? What sort of a joy is a thing of beauty? Is it an animal or a spiritual joy? Is the delight of a mother in fondling her smiling baby a physical or a moral delight? But though we cannot divide pleasures into animal and moral, unworthy and worthy, we can, nevertheless, divide them into lower and higher pleasures; the lower, those which, like eating and drinking, prompt to the maintenance and reproduction of life and which can be impaired or destroyed by prolongation or repetition; the higher, those which, like the pleasures of the eye or ear, seem to be ends in themselves. In the lower there can be destructive excess, in the higher excess is impossible.

Recognizing, then, that there are higher pleasures than eating and drinking, let us clearly perceive that three meals a day all one's life not only give in themselves a constantly renewed innocent satisfaction, but provide the necessary foundation for all other satisfactions. Taking food and drink is a great enjoyment for healthy people, and those who do not enjoy eating seldom have much capacity for enjoyment or usefulness of any sort. Under ordinary circumstances it is by no means a purely bodily pleasure. We do not eat alone, but in families, or sets of friends and comrades; and the table is the best centre of friendships and of the domestic affections. When, therefore, a workingman says that he has worked all his life to procure a subsistence for himself and his family,

he states that he has secured some fundamental satisfactions, namely, food, productive employment, and family life. The satisfaction of eating is so completely a matter of appetite that such distinction as there is between the luxurious and the hardy in regard to this enjoyment is altogether in favor of the hardy. Who does not remember some rough and perhaps scanty meal in camp, or on the march, or at sea, or in the woods, which was infinitely more delicious than the most luxurious dinner during indoor or sedentary life? But that appetite depends on health. Take good care, then, of your teeth and your stomachs, and be ashamed not of enjoying your food, but of not enjoying it. There was a deal of sound human nature in the unexpected reply of the dying old woman to her minister's leading question: "Here at the end of a long life, which of the Lord's mercies are you most thankful for?" Her eye brightened as she answered: "My victuals."

Let us count next pleasures through the eye. Unlike the other senses, the eye is always at work except when we sleep, and may, consequently, be the vehicle of far more enjoyment than any other organ of sense. It has given our race its ideas of infinity, symmetry, grace and splendor; it is a chief source of childhood's joys, and throughout life the guide to almost all pleasurable activities. The pleasure it gives us, however, depends largely upon the amount of attention we pay to the pictures which it incessantly sets before the brain. Two men walk along the same road: one notices the blue depths of the sky, the floating clouds, the opening leaves upon the trees, the green grass, the yellow buttercups and the far stretch of the open fields; the other has precisely the same pictures on his retina, but pays no attention to them. One sees, and the other does not see; one enjoys an unspeakable pleasure, and the other loses that pleasure which is as free to him as the air. The beauties which the eye reveals are infinitely various in quality and scale; one mind prefers the minute, another the vast; one the delicate and tender, another the coarse and rough; one the inanimate things, another the animate creation. The whole outward world is the kingdom of the observant eye. He who enters into any part of that kingdom to possess it has a store of pure enjoyment in life which is literally inexhaustible and immeasurable. His eyes alone will give him a life worth living.

Next comes the ear as a minister of enjoyment, but next at a great interval. The average man probably does not recognize that he gets much pleasure through hearing. He thinks that his ears are to him chiefly a convenient means of human intercourse. But let him experience a temporary deafness, and he will learn that many a keen delight came to him through the ear. He will miss the beloved voice, the merry laugh, the hum of the city, the distant chime, the song of birds, the running brook, the breeze in the trees, the lapping wavelets, and the thundering beach; and he will learn that familiar sounds have been to him sources of pure delight—an important element in his well-being. Old Isaac Walton found in the lovely sounds of earth a hint of Heaven:

How joyed my heart in the rich melodies  
That overhead and round me did arise!  
The moving leaves—the water's gentle flow—  
Delicious music hung on every bough.  
Then said I in my heart, If that the Lord  
Such lovely music on the earth accord;  
If to weak, sinful man such sounds are given,  
Oh! what must be the melody of heaven!

A high degree of that fine pleasure which music gives is not within the reach of all; yet there are few to whom the pleasure is wholly denied. To take part in producing harmony, as in part-singing, gives the singers an intense pleasure, which is doubtless partly physical and partly mental. I am told that to play good music at sight, as one of several performers playing different instruments, is as keen a sensuous and intellectual enjoyment as the world affords.

These pleasures through the eye and ear are open in civilized society to all who have the will to seek them, and the intelligence to cultivate the facilities through which they are enjoyed. They are quite as likely to bless him who works with hand or brain all day for a living, as him who lives inactive on his own savings or on those of other people. The outward world yields them spontaneously to every healthy body and alert mind; but the active mind is as essential to the winning of them as the sound body.

There is one great field of knowledge, too much neglected in our

schools and colleges, which offers to the student endless pleasures and occupations throughout the trained and quickened senses of sight, hearing, and touch. I mean the wide field called natural history, which comprehends geography, meteorology, botany, zoology, mineralogy, and geology. Charles Darwin, the greatest naturalist of the past century, said that with natural history and the domestic affections a man might be truly happy. Not long ago I was urging a young naturalist of twenty-six to spend the next summer in Europe. He thought it was hardly right for him to allow himself that indulgence; and when I urged that the journey would be very enjoyable as well as profitable, he replied: "Yes; but you know I can be happy anywhere in the months when things are growing." He meant that the pleasures of observation were enough for him when he could be out of doors. That young man was poor, delicate in health, and of a retiring and diffident disposition; yet life was full of keenest interest to him.

Our century is distinguished by an ardent return of civilized man to that love of nature from which books and urban life had temporarily diverted him. The poetry and the science of our times alike foster this love, and add to the delights which come to lovers of nature through the keen senses, the delights of the soaring imagination and the far-reaching reason. In many of our mental moods the contemplation of nature brings peace and joy. Her patient ways shame hasty little man; her vastnesses calm and elevate his troubled mind; her terrors fill him with awe; her inexplicable and infinite beauties with delight. Her equal care for the least things and the greatest corrects his scale of values. He cannot but believe that the vast material frame of things is informed and directed by an infinite Intelligence and Will, just as his little animal body is informed by his own conscious mind and will.

It is apparent from what I have said of pleasures through the eye and ear, and from contact with nature, that a good measure of out-of-door life is desirable for him who would secure the elements of a happy life. The urban tendency of our population militates against free access to out-of-door delights. The farmer works all day in the fields, and his children wander at will in the open air; the sailor can see at any moment the whole hemisphere of the heavens and the broad plain of the



sea; but the city resident may not see a tree or a shrub for weeks together, and can barely discern a narrow strip of sky, as he walks at the bottom of the deep ditches we call streets. The wise man whose work is in the city, and indoors at that, will take every possible opportunity to escape into the fresh air and the open country. Certain good tendencies in this respect have appeared within recent years. Hundreds of thousands of people who must work daily in compact cities now live in open suburbs; cities provide parks and decorated avenues of approach to parks; out-of-door sports and exercises become popular; safe country boarding-schools for city children are multiplied, and public holidays and half-holidays increase in number. These are appreciable compensations for the disadvantages of city life. The urban population which really utilizes these facilities may win a keener enjoyment from nature than the rural population, to whom natural beauty is at every moment accessible. The cultivation of mind and the increased sensibility which city life develops heighten the delight in natural beauty. Moreover, though man destroys much natural loveliness in occupying any territory for purposes of residence or business, he also creates much loveliness of grassy fields and banks, mirroring waters, perfectly developed trees, graceful shrubs and brilliant flowers. In these days no intelligent city population need lack the means and opportunities of frequent out-of-door enjoyment. Our climate is indeed rough and changeable, but, on the whole, produces scenes of much more various beauty than any monotonous climate, while against the occasional severity of our weather artificial protection is more and more provided. What we may wisely ask of our tailors and our landscape architects is protection in the open air from the extremes of heat, cold, and wind. The provision of an equable climate indoors is by no means sufficient to secure either the health or the happiness of the people.

From the love of nature we turn to family love. The domestic affections are the principal source of human happiness and well-being. The mutual loves of husband and wife, of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, are not only the chief sources of happiness, but the chief springs of action, and the chief safeguards from evil. The young

man and the young woman work and save in order that they may be married and have a home of their own; once married, they work and save that they may bring up well a family. The supreme object of the struggling and striving of most men is the family. One might almost say that the security and elevation of the family and of family life are the prime objects of civilization, and the ultimate ends of all industry and trade. In respect to this principal source of happiness, the young mechanic, operative, clerk, or laborer is generally better off than the young professional man, inasmuch as he can marry earlier. He goes from the parental roof to his own roof with only a short interval, if any, between. The workingman is often a grandfather before he is fifty years old; the professional man but seldom. Love before marriage, being the most attractive theme of poetry and fiction, gets a very disproportionate amount of attention in literature, as compared with the domestic affections after marriage.

Concerning these normal domestic joys, any discerning person who has experienced them, and has been intimate with four or five generations, will be likely to make three observations: In the first place, the realization of the natural and legitimate enjoyments in domestic life depends on the possession of physical and moral health. Whatever impairs bodily vigor, animal spirits, and good temper lessens the chance of attaining to the natural domestic joys,—joys which by themselves, without any additions whatever except food and steady work, make earthly life worth living. In the second place, they endure, and increase with lapse of years; the satisfactions of normal married life do not decline, but mount. Children are more and more interesting as they grow older; at all stages, from babyhood to manhood and womanhood, they are to be daily enjoyed. People who think they shall enjoy their children tomorrow, or year after next, will never enjoy them. The greatest pleasure in them comes late; for, as Hamerton mentions in his *Human Intercourse*, the most exquisite satisfaction of the parent is to come to respect and admire the powers and character of the child. Thirdly, the family affections and joys are the ultimate source of civilized man's idea of a loving God,—an idea which is a deep root of happiness when it becomes an abiding conviction. They have supplied all the conceptions

of which this idea is the supreme essence, or infinite product. It deserves mention here that these supreme enjoyments of the normal, natural life—the domestic joys—are woman's more than man's; because his function of bread-winning necessarily separates him from his home during a good part of his time, particularly since domestic or house industries have been superseded by factory methods.

Turn now to the satisfaction which comes from physical exertion, including brainwork. Everybody knows some form of activity which gives him satisfaction. Perhaps it is riding a horse, or rowing a boat, or tramping all day through woods or along beaches with a gun on the shoulder, or climbing a mountain, or massing into a ball or bloom a paste of sticky iron in a puddling furnace (that heaviest of labor), or wrestling with the handles of the plunging, staggering plow, or tugging at a boat's tiller when the breeze is fresh, or getting in hay before the shower. There is real pleasure and exhilaration in bodily exertion, particularly with companionship (of men or animals) and competition. There is pleasure in the exertion even when it is pushed to the point of fatigue, as many a sportsman knows; and this pleasure is in good measure independent of the attainment of any practical end. There is pleasure in mere struggle, so it be not hopeless, and in overcoming resistance, obstacles, and hardships. When to the pleasure of exertion is added the satisfaction of producing a new value, and the further satisfaction of earning a livelihood through that new value, we have the common pleasurable conditions of productive labor. Every workingman who is worth his salt (I care not whether he works with his hands and brains, or with his brains alone) takes satisfaction, first, in the working, secondly, in the product of his work, and thirdly, in what that product yields to him. The carpenter who takes no pleasure in the mantel he has made, the farm laborer who does not care for the crops he has cultivated, the weaver who takes no pride in the cloth he has woven, the engineer who takes no interest in the working of the engine he directs, is a monstrosity. It is an objection to many forms of intellectual labor that their immediate product is intangible and often imperceptible. The fruit of mental labor is often diffused, remote, or subtle. It eludes meas-

urement, and even observation. On the other hand, mental labor is more enjoyable than manual labor in the process. The essence of the joy lies in the doing rather than in the result of the doing. There is a life-long and solid satisfaction in any productive labor, manual or mental, which is not pushed beyond the limit of strength. The difference between the various occupations of men in respect to yielding this satisfaction is much less than people suppose; for occupations become habitual in time, and the daily work in every calling gets to be so familiar that it may fairly be called monotonous. My occupation, for instance, offers, I believe, more variety than that of most professional men; yet I should say that nine-tenths of my work, from day to day, was routine work, presenting no more novelty or fresh interest to me than the work of a carpenter or blacksmith, who is always making new things on old types, presents to him. The Oriental, hot-climate figment that labor is a curse is contradicted by the experience of all the progressive nations. The Teutonic stock owes everything that is great and inspiring in its destiny to its faculty of overcoming difficulties by hard work, and of taking heartfelt satisfaction in this victorious work. It is not the dawdlers and triflers who find life worth living; it is the steady, strenuous, robust workers.

Once when I was talking with Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes about the best pleasures in life, he mentioned, as one of the most precious, frequent contact with quick and well-stored minds in large variety; he valued highly the number, frequency, and variety of quickening intellectual encounters. We were thinking of contact in conversation; but this pleasure, if only to be procured by personal meetings, would obviously be within the reach, as a rule, of only a very limited number of persons. Fortunately for us and for posterity, the cheap printing-press has put within easy reach of every man who can read all the best minds both of the past and the present. For one-tenth part of a year's wages a young mechanic can buy, before he marries, a library of famous books which, if he masters it, will make him a well-read man. For half-a-day's wages a clerk can provide himself with a weekly paper which will keep him informed for a year of all important current events. Public libraries,

circulating libraries, Sunday-school libraries, and book-clubs nowadays bring much reading to the door of every household and every solitary creature that wants to read. This is a new privilege for the mass of mankind; and it is an inexhaustible source of intellectual and spiritual nutriment. It seems as if this new privilege alone must alter the whole aspect of society in a few generations. Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors, and the most patient of teachers. With his daily work and his books, many a man whom the world thought forlorn has found life worth living. It is a mistake to suppose that a great deal of leisure is necessary for this happy intercourse with books. Ten minutes a day devoted affectionately to good books—indeed to one book of the first order like the English Bible or Shakespeare, or to two or three books of the second order like Homer, Virgil, Milton, or Bacon—will in thirty years make all the difference between a cultivated and an uncultivated man, between a man mentally rich and a man mentally poor. The pleasures of reading are, of course, in good part pleasures of the imagination; but they are just as natural and actual as pleasures of the sense, and are often more accessible and more lasting.

### HORACE, 65-8 B.C.

Latin poet, one of the greatest of lyric poets,  
famous for his *Satires* and his *Odes*

BUT HE LIVES happily upon a little on whose frugal board gleams the ancestral salt-dish, and whose soft slumbers are not broken by fear or sordid greed. Why do we strive so hard in our brief lives for great possessions? Why do we change our own land for climes warmed by a foreign sun? What exile from his country ever escaped himself too? Morbid care mounts even the brass-bound galley, nor fails to overtake the troops of horse, swifter than stags, swifter than Eurus when he drives the storm before him. Let the soul be joyful in the present, let it dis-

dain to care for what the future has in store, and temper bitterness with smile serene!

The man whom the flow of prosperity has overmuch delighted, will be shaken by a change of fortune. If you chance to admire anything, you will be loth to lay it down. Shun grandeur; beneath a humble roof you may outrun in the course of life kings and the friends of kings. A stag superior in the fight, was wont to drive away a horse from their common pasture, until the weaker in the lengthened strife besought the aid of man and took the bit; but after he had quitted his foe, an impetuous conqueror, he did not dislodge the rider from his back, nor bit from his mouth. So, he who through dread of poverty lacks freedom that is more precious than metals, carries in his covetousness a master, and will be a slave for ever, because he knows not how to live upon a little. If the fortune he possesses does not fit a man, it will, like the shoe in the story, trip him up if it be too large for his foot, pinch him, if too small. If pleased with your lot, you will live wisely, my Aristius, and not let me go unchastised, when I shall appear to be hoarding up more stores than are sufficient, and never to pause. Money amassed is each man's lord or slave; though it deserves rather to follow than to pull the twisted rope.

### LIN YUTANG, 1895-

Chinese writer, author of *The Importance of Living*

DIOGENES, THE CORINTHIAN philosopher, was once asked by Alexander what favor he would ask of the great conqueror, and his answer was a request that the conqueror stand a little aside so that he could enjoy his sunshine. This was the cynical man who went about in daytime with

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a lantern to look for an honest man. He had only one rough garment for winter and summer, and he slept and lived in a tub. Once he had a cup, but on learning that he could drink water from his hands, he threw it away, believing that by so doing, he had one less desire in this world.

Diogenes represents to us moderns an ideal very much opposite to ours, which seems to measure progress by the number of a man's wants and luxuries, and for that reason, the story always provokes some laughter and a certain envy. The fact is, we are very much in confusion as to what we really want. The modern man finds himself in continual perplexity in regard to many problems, and most of all in problems that affect most closely his personal life. The modern man cannot spare himself a certain luxurious envy for that ascetic ideal of Diogenes, and at the same time is far from willing to miss a really good moving picture show. That gives us the so-called "restlessness" of the modern spirit.

Now it is of course very easy to tear Diogenes to pieces. First of all, Diogenes lived in a gentle Mediterranean climate. No lady therefore need be ashamed that, living in a colder country than Greece, she wants a fur coat. Secondly, I do not respect any man who does not keep at least two sets of underwear, in case he sends one to the laundry. A Diogenes in the story book may exhale a certain spiritual fragrance, but a Diogenes as a bedfellow would be a different story. Thirdly, it is dangerous to teach our schoolboys that kind of ideal, since one of the prime aims of education is to teach them at least a love for books, for which Diogenes apparently did not care twopence. Fourthly, Diogenes lived in an age when the movies had not yet been invented and Mickey Mouse had not yet come to enrich our lives. Any man or boy who professes indifference to a Mickey Mouse cartoon is decidedly a mental degenerate and can be of no use to civilization. Generally, it is the man who has many wants and desires and hopes that lives a richer and more complete life, not the one who goes on in life, indifferent to what is around him. The tramp in the suburbs of London who does not admire and envy a smug fireside is decidedly a lower, not a higher, kind of animal.

The real charm of Diogenes for us lies in the fact that we moderns want too many things, and particularly that we often do not know what

those things are. It is a trite saying that every society lady who goes the mad rounds of parties and pleasures soon is overcome by a feeling of utter boredom. A millionaire heiress who crosses the Atlantic four times a year from Paris to Buenos Aires, and back to the Riviera and Atlantic City, is of course only trying to escape from herself. And her male counterpart—I use the word “male” deliberately in the animal sense—has so many girl friends that he cannot even fall in love with one. That is the modern malady, which makes Diogenes sometimes appear like a hero to us.

In our best and sanest moments, however, we know that Diogenes’ god cannot be our god, that we want a good many things in life, and that these things are definitely good for us. The man who knows what he wants is a happy man.

I think I know what I want. Here are the things that would make me happy. I shall not want other things.

I want a room of my own, where I can work. A room that is neither particularly clean nor orderly. No Mademoiselle Agathe to dust everything she can reach with her dust cloth. But a room comfortable and intimate and familiar. Over my couch hangs a Buddhist oil lantern, the kind you see before Buddhist or Catholic altars. An atmosphere full of smoke and the smell of books and unaccountable odors. On the shelf overlying the couch are books, a good variety of them, but not too many—only those I can read or have read with profit again and again, against the opinion of all the book reviewers of the world. None that takes too long to read, none that has a sustained argument, and none that has too much cold splendor of logic. They are books that I frankly and sincerely like. I would read Rabelais along with “Mutt and Jeff” and Don Quixote with “Bringing up Father.” One or two Booth Tarkingtons, some cheap third-rate penny novels, some detective stories. None of those sentimental self-delineators for me. No James Joyce and no T. S. Eliot. My reason for not reading Karl Marx or Immanuel Kant is very simple: I can never get beyond the third page.

I want some decent gentlemen’s clothing that I have worn for some time, and a pair of old shoes. I want the freedom to wear as little as I care to. While I do not go as far as Ku Ch’ienli, the famous scholar who



read the classics naked, I must be allowed to go half naked in my own room when the temperature is ninety-five in the shade, and I shall not be ashamed to appear so before my servants. I want them to be as natural beings as myself. I want a shower bath in summer and a good fireside with logs burning in winter.

I want a home where I can be myself. I want to hear my wife's voice and the children's laughter upstairs when I am working downstairs, and downstairs when I am working upstairs. I want children who are children, who will go with me to play in the rain, and who enjoy a shower bath as much as I do. I want a patch of ground where my children can build brick houses and feed chickens, and water the flowers. I want to hear a cock crying cock-a-doodle-do in the morning. I want tall, old trees in the neighborhood.

I want some good friends, friends who are as familiar as life itself, friends to whom I need not be polite, and who will tell me all their troubles, matrimonial or otherwise, who can quote Aristophanes and crack some dirty jokes, friends who are spiritually rich and who can talk dirt and philosophy with the same candor, friends who have definite hobbies and opinions about persons and things, who have their private beliefs and respect mine.

I want a good cook, who knows how to cook vegetables and make delicious soups. I want an old, old servant, who thinks I am a great man, but does not know where my greatness lies.

I want a good library, some good cigars, and a woman who understands and who leaves me free to do my work.

I want some bamboos in front of my study window, a rainy climate in summer, and a clear, blue sky in winter, such as we have in Peking.

I want the freedom to be myself.

## MICHEL EYQUEM de MONTAIGNE

1533-92

French philosopher and essayist. His famous *Essays* are tolerant in spirit and familiar and easy in style. Through them all runs the spirit of the phrase, "*Que sais-je?*"—What do I know?

IT NEEDS GOOD management to enjoy life. I enjoy it doubly as much as others, for the measure of enjoyment depends upon the more or less attention we give to it. Especially now that I feel mine to be so brief in time I try to increase it in weight; I try to arrest the speed of its flight by speedily laying hold of it, and, by the zest of my enjoyment, to make up for its hasty ebbing. The shorter my possession of life the fuller and deeper must I live it.

Others feel the sweetness of contentment and well-being; I feel it as well as they, but not in letting it pass by and slip away. Rather should we study, relish and ruminate it, in order to give adequate thanks to him who bestows it upon us.

They enjoy other pleasures, as they do that of sleep, unconsciously. I used to enjoy being disturbed in my sleep in order to get a glimpse of it, and not allow it so senselessly to slip away.

I meditate over a thing that gives me pleasure; I do not skim over it, I go to the bottom of it and force my reason, now grown peevish and hard to please, to welcome it. Am I in some situation where I feel at rest? Is there some sensual pleasure that tickles me? I do not allow my senses to cheat me of it. I make my soul to share in it, not in order to be drawn into it, but to find it acceptable; not to lose, but to find herself in it. And I induce her, for her part, to mirror herself in this fortunate state, to weigh and appreciate its happiness, and to magnify it. She will estimate how far she owes it to God that she is at peace with her conscience, free from other inner passions, that her body is in its natural healthy

state, fitly and properly enjoying the exercise of the agreeable and soothing functions with which he of his grace is pleased to compensate her for the afflictions with which his justice chastises us in its turn; how much it means to her to be so situated that, whithersoever she casts her eyes, the heavens around her are serene; that no desire, no fear or doubt disturbs her atmosphere; that there is no difficulty, past, present, or future, over which her imagination may not roam without harm.

Much light is thrown upon this consideration by comparison of my state with that of others. Thus, I can picture to myself in a thousand aspects those who are carried away and tossed about by Fortune or their own errors, as well as those who, more like me, so languidly and indifferently accept their good fortune. Those are the people who really "pass their time"; they overpass the present and what they possess, to be slaves to hope, and for the shadows and vain images that their imagination dangles before their eyes,

Like phantoms that, folk say, flit after death  
Or visions that befool the slumbering sense;

which speed and prolong their flight the more they are pursued. The fruit and aim of their pursuit is to pursue; as Alexander said the end of his labour was to labour;

Thinking naught is done, if aught is left to do.

For my part then, I love life and cultivate it such as it has pleased God to grant it to me. I do not go about wishing that it might be relieved of the necessity of eating and drinking, and I should think it no less pardonable a sin to wish that necessity to be doubled—the wise man early desires the treasures of Nature (Seneca);—or that our life could be sustained by merely putting into our mouth a little of that drug with which Epimenides took away his appetite, and kept himself alive; or that we could obtusely beget children by the fingers or heels (nay, in reverence be it spoken, that we could rather beget them voluptuously by the fingers and heels); or that the body should be without desire and incapable of being titillated.

Those would be ungrateful and wicked complaints. I accept heartily and gratefully what Nature has done for me; and I am proud and well

pleased with myself that I do so. For we wrong that great and all-powerful giver when we reject, destroy, and disfigure her gift. Being all good, she has made all things good. All things that are according to Nature are worthy of esteem (Cicero).

Of philosophical opinions I more readily embrace those which are most solid, that is to say, most human and most our own; my words, in keeping with my actions, are mean and humble.

Philosophy appears to me very childish when she rides the high horse, and preaches to us that it is a barbarous alliance to marry the divine with the earthly, the reasonable with the unreasonable, the severe with the indulgent, the honest with the dishonest; that sensual pleasure is a brutish thing, unworthy to be enjoyed by the sage; that the only pleasure to be derived from the enjoyment of a fair young bride is the conscientious pleasure of performing an orderly action, like putting on one's boots for a business ride. May her followers have no more right or nerve or sap in ravishing their wives than in learning her lessons!

That is not what Socrates, her master and ours, says. He prizes, as he should, the pleasures of the body; but he prefers those of the mind, as being more powerful, more enduring, more easy to come by, more varied and dignified. The latter by no means go alone, according to him (he is not so fanciful), but only come first. With him temperance is the moderator, not the enemy of pleasures.

Nature is a gentle guide, but not more gentle than she is wise and just. We must penetrate into the nature of things, and see exactly what it demands (Cicero). I try to follow her footsteps in all things; we have confounded the traces by artificial means. And the sovereign good of the Academics and the Peripatetics, which is to "live according to her," becomes for that reason difficult to limit and explain; as does also that of the Stoics, which, related to the other, is to "acquiesce in Nature."

Is it not a mistake to regard some actions as less worthy because they are necessary? Yet they will not knock it out of my head that the marriage of pleasure with necessity (with which, as an ancient says, the Gods always conspire) is a very proper marriage. Why do we dismember by divorce a fabric woven of so close and brotherly a correspondence? Rather, let us knit it again by mutual offices. Let the mind rouse and quicken the dulness of the body, and the body check and steady the

levity of the mind. He who exalts the nature of the soul as the sovereign good, and condemns the nature of the flesh as an evil thing, truly both carnally desires the soul and carnally flees the flesh; since he is inspired by human vanity, not by divine truth (Saint Augustine).

In this gift of God there is no part that is unworthy of our attention; we must account for it even to the last hair. And it is not a merely formal charge to man to direct man according to his nature; it is positive, simple, and of prime importance, and the Creator has given it to us seriously and sternly.

Authority alone has any weight with an ordinary intellect, and weighs still more heavily in a foreign tongue. Let us here renew the attack. Who will not say that it is the nature of the fool to do lazily and reluctantly what is to be done; to urge the body one way and the soul another; to be divided between wholly different movements (Seneca).

Come now, to prove it, let such a man some day tell you the diversions and fancies he fills his head with, for which he diverts his thoughts from a good meal, and regrets the hour he spends over his eating. You will find that there is nothing so insipid in all the dishes on your table as the fine things with which he is entertaining his mind (for the most part it would be better fairly to go to sleep than to keep awake for the thoughts of our waking hours); and you will find that all his talk and all his aspirations are not worth your savoury stew.

### W. BERAN WOLFE, 1900-35

American psychiatrist and follower of the school of Alfred Adler. His book, *How To Be Happy Though Human* is one of the best popular books on the art of personal adjustment.

WE COME to the discussion of those practical devices and techniques which may help the reader over temporary difficulties, once he has understood the grand strategy of living fully and completely, and devoted

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his energies to the pursuit of the good life. These practical suggestions cannot, in and of themselves, make anyone happy, but they may help in the solution of a number of problems, once you have understood that most problems can be solved. The way to happiness must, of necessity, lie along the channels of two great movements: the art of living with other people, and the art of living with oneself. Social adjustment itself is not enough for the good life, because there are periods in everyone's life when isolation may be arbitrarily enforced, when human contacts are practically precluded. It is in these periods that each of us must be able to make good company of himself, in order that life be rich and tolerable, and in order that we may prepare the foundations of future bonds with our fellow men, once our social contacts have been reestablished.

It is apparent that the first and most important device in the art of living with other people is the art of making friends. Unfortunately the men and women who need friends the most, are the least schooled in the business of making acquaintances, or, if they can make casual contacts with more or less ease, they have not learned the art of holding their friends. The "follow through" of social contacts is the most difficult part of this art because it premises the ability to identify yourself with your friends, to fit yourself into their patterns, and aid them on their way. This quality or faculty of *empathizing*, or identifying ourselves, must be learned, and can be learned. Socially well-adjusted individuals do it as a matter of course, but to those who are not socially well-adjusted, and need an additional training, the following technique may prove valuable.

It may be stated almost as a psychological law, that every human being, no matter how great or powerful, is discouraged in some degree, or in some special facet of his life. The neurotic individual however, believes that his discouragement and his distress are unique. He acts as if everyone else in the world were a superman, and he alone an impotent worm, incapable of meeting people without qualms of conscience and self-consciousness. As a matter of fact some of the individuals that the isolated neurotic envies the most because of their ready ease in social situations, are themselves the most discouraged, and like the small boy who whistles in the dark to keep himself from trembling with fear,

they over-act their courage in order to hide their own perplexity from their fellows.

The pattern of every individual's life is a stream from an imagined "minus" situation to an imagined "plus" situation. What we must do, if we wish to make a new acquaintance therefore, is to guess his goal from his actions—and with a little practice this is not at all difficult—and tell him something that would encourage him along the path which he is taking, to show not only that we appreciate his ends, but that we are aware of his success. To those who are expert in this art it is not difficult to subtly change an individual from a false pattern into a good one, and this is the essence of psychotherapy. In other words, when we wish to teach someone a new behavior pattern we must make our suggestions seem to fit into his pattern although we know all the time that if he takes our suggestions he will drift imperceptibly into a new and better pattern.

The technique of empathy is best illustrated by the story of the town fool and the lost donkey. In a small Russian town which boasted but a single donkey, great consternation was caused by the donkey's sudden and mysterious disappearance. A conclave of the village elders was called, and for three days and three nights they sat solemnly discussing the theoretical motives and causes of the donkey's disappearance and the possible chances of finding him again. In the midst of one of these solemn conferences a knock was heard on the door of the elders' conference chamber and the town fool entered with the news that he had found the lost donkey. When questioned how he had been able to succeed in his quest where all the elders, despite their wisdom had failed, the fool replied, "When I heard that the donkey was lost, I went to the donkey's stall, faced the wall as the donkey did, imagined that I was the donkey, and thought where I would go if I were to wander from the stall. Then I went to this place, and there the donkey was!"

If you would learn to make friends and to keep them, observe closely, and find some good point about the friend you wish to make and compliment him thereon. It is no art to find defects in people—anyone can

spot and criticize a character defect or a foolish habit or a stupid custom. It is much more difficult to find something good about a neighbor and to mention it in approbation and applause, without becoming sentimental or maudlin in the act. No woman wants to be told that she has grey hair, but every woman wants to know that the color scheme that she has chosen for her dress, probably with great care and forethought, is appreciated by the onlooker.

If you have learned in advance that an individual has a particular hobby, make it a point to ask a question about that hobby that will draw him out, thus to enable him to feel superior and more knowing, and give him an easy opportunity to expand his ego. There is no human being alive, who, if given the opportunity, does not like to find an audience. The art of making friends consists in large measure in shrewdly guessing the particular subject that your dinner partner would like to expand upon. Once you have learned to look sharply, and judge from the general ensemble of an individual what his probable interests are, it is not difficult to get that dinner partner to speak.

Each man and woman we meet, therefore, offers us an opportunity for constructive social behavior. Do not imagine that it bores the man who has just built a fine bridge, written a best-seller, or composed a great symphony, to hear your appreciation, even though your opinion is not expert. Do not imagine that success in the eyes of the world, is in itself a complete satisfaction to the individual who has attained it. Even the most successful crave iteration and reiteration of social approval. Nor is the ordinary layman who has achieved no worldly success at all beyond encouragement. It may be the color of his tie, or the quality of his laughter, or the fact that he knows the batting average of the latest baseball hero that gives you an opportunity to praise, to understand, and to find happiness by encouraging a fellow human being.

The beneficent results of this technique are twofold. It gives the prospective friend the necessary encouragement and the necessary sense of appreciation which moves him to be natural and expressive. Secondly it is likely to color his attitude toward you and make him want to approve of you. Consequently he will search your personality for some



facet worthy of approbation in order to make your approval of his conduct or ideas the more valuable.

After a series of such searches a friendship will germinate under the warm sun of mutual admiration. Your friend will feel a certain sense of *noblesse oblige* to enquire about your interests, and you, in turn will have the opportunity to air your views and expand your ego. And if you are a good human being, you will always see to it that the other fellow has the greater say. You will minimize your own interests and accomplishments, no matter how great they actually are, and emphasize the interest you have in the other fellow's situation. This is the way of true friendship.

We must, in all fairness, admit you may occasionally be taken advantage of by an egoistic neurotic who seizes upon your good nature as an opportunity of venting his little neurosis on your all too willing ears. When your partner becomes too neurotically voluble, discretion and retreat, are the best part of valor. But one friend made, is worth a dozen neurotics who bore you with their egoistic broadcasts. And even these neurotics can be used as parables in the understanding of human nature, and of what not to do if you would be happy in the friendship of your fellows.

There are always certain individuals who indulge in the sport of "soul-catching." They are usually pampered neurotics who put their very best foot forward in order to "catch" you in the net of their affability with the ulterior, unconscious, purpose of exploiting your friendship later. Everyone knows people who "know" a host of acquaintances, but have no single friend. "Soul catching" is their profession, a profession in which they develop a considerable virtuosity. "Soul catching" is another of the side-shows of the social life, characterized, like begging, "confidence" games, charity "rackets" and the like, by a misuse of the social feeling of the victim. It is impossible completely to avoid entanglements in the nets of an occasional "soul catcher," but if you wish to rid yourself of the company of such a neurotic it is only necessary to ask him

to do you a favor. The "soul-catcher" retreats from the social responsibilities of friendship with incredible celerity!

As a matter of fact, two willing ears are among the most valuable of all social assets. Learn to listen intelligently and to identify yourself with the speaker while you listen. Many an individual who has no especial gifts nor talents has gone through life with a host of friends, happy in the security of the good will of every neighbor, because he has been willing to listen to the recital of the exploits of a neighbor's baby son or pet terrier. Because most people are lonely, and have no one to talk with, they are forever seeking a willing listener, and yet a sympathetic listener is a rare find.

We once asked a patient how he explained his sudden cure of an anxiety neurosis of eight years' standing, and he answered, "Doctor, you are the first person I have met in ten years who made a noise like a human being!" We knew that this patient had not listened for this sound very hard and we asked him to explain more fully. He answered, "Well, you're the first man I have met who could listen to a man's story for an hour without trying to pin a label on him or hurl a moral preachment at him!"

This brings us to the consideration of the tendency of most human beings to secure themselves in their judgment and in their own self-esteem by making "snap" judgments of their fellows, and thinking that because they have labelled another a snob, or a cad, a good fellow, or a bounder, that they have understood him. Everyone runs across other human beings who seem to be acting in an inconsequential or even insane fashion. The first impulse is to damn that which we cannot understand, and this impulse is probably at the basis of many of the persecutions, wars, and abuses of human rights that we read about in history.

It seems far better to reserve and suspend judgment on any questionable case until we are in possession of more facts. And in any case, the happy human being again identifies himself so far as he is able with any "freak" he meets and says, "Now, under what circumstances, and to what end, would I be doing exactly the same thing?" We must realize that everyone is trying to be a superman and a superwoman according

to their interpretation of the facts. It does not help either our understanding, nor our influence on these individuals, if we rashly put them in this, that, or the other fixed category, and believe that because we have labelled them, that we have understood and mastered their personalities.

A great many individuals go through life with the firm conviction that men are dishonest and bad, and that when you find a person who is ostensibly good, he is being good for some ulterior motive. However true this may be in individual cases, from a practical point of view, this philosophic attitude of misanthropy and mistrust, is false and dangerous. That there are cheats and crooks goes without saying, but the great majority of human beings are essentially honest and decent. We would far rather be deceived a dozen times by a glib racketeer, than to allow a really worthy individual to go once without our help. Somehow the rewards of helping a fellow human being in distress outweigh the chagrin of being duped and deceived by a smooth social parasite.

On the other hand there are a great many people, notably professional beggars and the like, who make a profession of preying on the sympathies of their more socially minded neighbors. It is a mistake to give aid to these people. Charity should always be done where you know that your charity is being effectively administered by organizations which make it their business to help the needy and the sick. When you help a social parasite you rob three people: yourself, the really needy who could have been helped by your contribution, and the parasite who is encouraged to a useless way of life.

Our traditional codes of social conduct are so stultifying that the average man and woman looks at any stranger as if he were a potential enemy. We have often suggested to our patients that they begin a conversation with their neighbor in the bus or at the theatre simply for the purpose of initiating a conversation, only to have the patient shrink in horror from the suggestion of such "forwardness." If we use some common sense in such contacts there can be no harm in them. If you speak to another human being at an art gallery or a concert, the likeli-

hood is that his goals and aims will be somewhat similar to your own. Most of the individuals who make up a crowd waiting in line at a railroad station, at a steamship pier, or at a theatre are just as lonely as you are, and just as afraid to make contacts with another human being. No one says a word, and everyone is bored and distressed. Someone must be the more intelligent and the more courageous and make the first step toward establishing a social *rapport*. Be that more intelligent person!

In our experience a courteous or kindly word of greeting or interest is almost never rebuffed. And let anyone who is rebuffed remember this: any human being who rebuffs a cordial greeting or the expression of human interest is likely to be a severely neurotic man or woman, too prejudiced in his egoistic self-approbation to make fresh human contacts. Great minds are the most cordial and the most friendly. We have seen neurotic, ill-bred, spoiled, and socially maladjusted adults "insulted" by the greeting of a stranger, but we have never known a really big human being to be insulted by a stranger. On the contrary we have seen one of the world's most eminent surgeons spend half an hour discussing the plight of a sick horse with a super-annuated hackdriver, and we have seen an admiral stop an important interview to explain the mysteries of a battleship turret to a twelve-year-old boy.

Part of the technique of making friends, therefore, consists in "breaking the ice." It is for this reason, primarily, that weather, baseball and politics exist as topics of small talk. We have seen super-serious neurotics who spurned conversation because they could not immediately discuss Kantian metaphysics or the Einsteinian theory of relativity with a casual acquaintance, but it is obvious that this type of intellectual snobbery is merely an artificial defense mechanism.

Let no one who would make friends forego these small topics of conversation. They serve merely as the lubricating oil of human communal life, and are as important as good manners, cleanliness, and being well-dressed. To those who are incapable of making these contacts we suggest the following: go up to several strangers every day and enquire the time, or the location of a certain store, or the best way to reach a certain address, regardless of the absolute value of such information. This is the first step in training yourself to talk to strangers. Carry this on until it

no longer makes you self-conscious to make a "cold" contact.

The second step in the art of making friends is the "follow through" of making yourself valuable to the people you have contacted. It is a very good technique to begin with individuals who are overlooked by the average egoistic men and women we see madly looking for their own advantage in life. It is always valuable to be pleasant to elderly people, to cripples, to shy and timid souls who seem to shrink from social contacts, to children, to "wall-flowers," and to animals. It is tremendously encouraging to any elderly individual if a young man or woman comes up to talk with them when younger, more attractive individuals are in the same gathering.

Success in the social life lies in the path of the individual who can make himself valuable to those who are all too frequently overlooked in the mad rush of the machine age. Being attentive to the overlooked minority is doubly valuable, because it gives you the best possible opportunity of immediately proving your social-mindedness: it enriches not only the timid or overlooked individual and adds to the store of human happiness, but also immediately gives you the feeling of being indispensable to another's happiness. And this feeling is the basis of objective self-esteem.

We know of a young architect struggling for his first job, who, in a spirit of levity, offered to design a dog-house in Georgian style for an old lady. The lady was pleased with the idea of having her dog-house in harmony with her country home, gave the young architect the commission, and was so satisfied with his work that she later commissioned him to do a large job in the modernization of her town house, which marked the beginning of this architect's very successful career. Similarly a young doctor who was called into a home to take care of a minor emergency, endeared himself to the family by his solicitude in the care of a sick cat. Subsequently he became the family physician of this large family, and was enthusiastically recommended to an important clientele of patients simply because he had taken the time and the interest to do more than his required work. One of our patients contracted a very happy and successful marriage, because, following our advice to pay

court to what seemed to be a "wall-flower," he found a young woman greatly superior in every way to the more attractively dressed flappers at a college dance, with whom he was able to experience the depths of a rich friendship, once he had "broken the ice" and shown his interest.

We can hear the objections of social and moral purists who consider these methods of establishing social contacts crude and hypocritical. It is all very well for those who are socially well-established to allow themselves the luxury of formal introductions, but to those who are isolated the traditional means of meeting new people are totally inadequate. So long as the average American community makes no conscious effort to make the social adjustment of its constituents its immediate concern by establishing clubs, recreational facilities, community dancing, singing, or athletic activities, we must fall back upon these primitive devices. And so far as the seemingly cold-blooded hypocrisy of these techniques is concerned we must add that sincerity and formality are social luxuries which are beyond the means of the isolated, the timid, and the self-conscious. Nothing is insincere nor hypocritical if it extends and enriches human relations.

It is highly important first to master the philosophy of friendship, and to understand the value of a constructive social life. But once you have set yourself on the path of increasing your social horizons, it is equally important to "follow up" and "follow through" to make those friendships vital and lasting. It is in this secondary sphere that most neurotic and isolated individuals fall short. And yet the technique of social "follow up" is very simple. A few minutes a day devoted to telephoning old friends and expressing concern and interest in their activities will quickly result in the reinforcement of friendships which would otherwise fall into innocuous desuetude.

It is a good idea not to enter a friend's home without bringing some little gift. This does not entail great investments, because the value of this good old custom inheres in the thoughtfulness, not the gift itself. Sometimes a single rose is richer in its indication of friendship than a precious stone. It is wise to keep a record of anniversaries and birthdays, and to recall one's interest in a friend, or relative by remembering these occasions if only with a card or a telephone call. Human relations to be

sure, are built around a structural framework of philanthropy, sympathy, honesty and helpfulness, but the single bricks which give the house of friendship its unique and individual façade are cemented with trivial favors and inconsequential affirmations of regard.

A patient once came to our office crying bitterly because her husband had neglected her on her birthday. The husband had, she admitted, handed her a package containing \$100,000 worth of stocks in his company, but he had neglected to send her the yellow roses which had always been the sign of his love and affection on previous anniversaries. We may agree objectively with the husband that her demands were somewhat unreasonable, in the light of his more valuable gift, but we know that many marriages go on the rocks of unhappiness just because a husband or a wife neglects the little things that count.

This brings us to the very practical consideration of gifts. There are just two kinds of gifts. You either give something that you like and value highly, or you go out of your way to give something that would be valuable to the person whom you desire to honor. Many people choose the former, or projective type of giving which includes that useless prostitution of giving, the giving of gifts for reasons of duty, custom, or the like. This is the easiest—and the worst way to make a present. When you give a small boy who is aching to have a new tennis racket, a copy of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* because of some vague hope that it "might do him good"—you practice a subjective-projective giving. You might just as well never give anything as to make an inappropriate, casual, or disinterested gift. The only proper giving is giving which represents the donor's active identification with the presentee's pattern of life. Such empathy takes more time, but it enriches both him who gives and him who receives, and this mutual enrichment is, after all, the only valid reason for ever giving anything.

Just as no one can be happy in work which is centered entirely about his own person and deals exclusively with the satisfaction of his own,

immediate needs, so no one can be entirely happy in social relations which focus only in himself and his immediate and narrow sphere of influence. To find happiness we must seek for it in a focus outside ourselves. To do this in the social world it is desirable that every individual commit himself definitely to a program of social awareness, social expansion, and social concern. There is little merit in deploring social injustice, civic corruption, political chicanery or international chauvinism, but if you get into some social movement that appeals to you and devote your interest, attention, and activity to it you are likely to reap a valuable dividend therefrom.

If you live only for yourself you are always in immediate danger of being bored to death with the repetition of your own views and interests. If your center of gravity is in some extra-personal social movement you profit by the vitality and the objectivity of that movement. It matters little, for psychological purposes, whether you interest yourself in making your city cleaner, or enlist in the international campaign to rid the world of the illicit opium traffic, whether you go in for Birth Control or become a crusader against the vicious influence of comstockery and superstition. Choose a movement that presents a distinct trend toward greater human happiness and align yourself with it. No one has learned the meaning of living until he has surrendered his ego to the service of his fellow men.

Wide social horizons are the more worth cultivation because no single social group is completely objective in its scope. Read conservative and liberal papers at the same time, and learn to draw your own conclusions from the evidence that is presented by both. Try to make your social contacts and interests complement your occupational or professional interests. If you are a school teacher you may well afford to interest yourself in international politics or some artistic movement. If you are a physician it cannot hurt you to interest yourself in artists and business men. If you are a lawyer it will extend your usefulness to know the latest pedagogical theories.

Groups which devote themselves to cultural and social ends, exist in every town and city and those who are separated from the greater urban centers are no longer entirely isolated because of the pervasive influence



of the radio. It is well to remember that the more languages you know the more times you multiply your humanity, and those who are really constrained by force of circumstance from making further human contacts, can always make new contacts with foreign cultures and past ages by learning a new language.

There may be some readers to whom even these elementary steps seem difficult. We urge them to spend their sleepless nights in thinking about giving someone—not a member of their immediate families—some little pleasure. After some thought they will in all probability find ways and means to carry some of their thoughts into practice. We once counselled a successful, and very egoistic business man who could find no time to concern himself with the affairs and woes of his fellow men during his business day to go down to the main waiting room of the Grand Central Station in New York and to look for someone to help, someone to direct to their train, someone to carry a heavy valise for, someone to encourage with a smile or cheery word. We forbade him to leave the station until he had found an opportunity to be of some service to another human being. Largely in a spirit of supercilious condescension and patronage he obeyed our prescription and his opportunity for social service came on the very first evening that he made the experiment.

A poor woman from a country town had come to New York to meet her daughter. She had lost the slip with her daughter's address, and she was too shy and too timid to enquire of a guard. She sat weeping silently in a corner of the waiting room, a picture of forlorn perplexity. Our patient managed to find her daughter's address in the telephone directory, took the old lady and her bags and put her in a taxicab, and accompanied her to an obscure street in the Bronx. On the way he stopped and bought the old lady a few roses—the first that had ever been given her. She wept for sheer joy on his shoulder.

He deposited her, smiling between her tears, in her daughter's house, rushed to a telephone to call us. "My God, Doc, I feel like a human being, at last!" he blurted as he told us the story. Thereafter he became a figure haunting the waiting room of the Grand Central Station, a sort of modern Haroun-al-Raschid. Every Christmas he sends the old lady of his first adventure in constructive humanity a dozen of the finest roses

he can buy. Since then he has become one of the directors of a boys' club on the lower East Side of New York, and a member of various child welfare and civic organizations.

We should expand our occupational interests at the same time that we should attempt to extend our social horizons. The business of being busy is one of the most important in the life of a human being. Those sad human beings who do not have to work are to be pitied if they do not find some avocation to divert their energies into some useful channel. A great many agencies and individuals set themselves up nowadays as vocational guidance experts, and after elaborate tests they direct their clients to this, that, or the other occupation. In most cases they lose sight of the essential fact that the well-adjusted person finds work a source of salvation, and therefore has already found the proper vocation for himself.

Most of the individuals who seek vocational guidance really need to have the psychological reasons for work explained to them, so that, seeing work as a veritable source of personal expansion and a spring-board to self-esteem, they find the nearest and best occupation available, and devote themselves to it. The choice is really one between working and not working, never of an actual choice of occupation. The individual who is dissatisfied with his job for a good reason, usually has the courage to get out of it, and into another occupation that gives him greater satisfaction.

The best work in the world, is that occupation which represents training in the compensation for some organic or other inferiority feeling in terms of social usefulness. Not everyone can find the best job for himself. A great many are forced by the unfortunate economic structure of modern society to busy themselves with the necessary chores and hack-work of the world, in order to earn a living. For them the focus of values must be not in work itself but in their other human relations, whether in society, in sex, in their own family, or in some avocation. While it is true that the economic structure forces many individuals into work which is neither interesting nor satisfaction-giving, nothing can preven

anyone from assuming an avocation which does offer that satisfaction.

There is a certain quantum of creative energy left in every human being which is not absorbed by the business of a work-a-day world. Even individuals who are engaged in some eminently satisfactory occupation have some creative energy left over. This is the essential godliness in man. We must all create something—or class ourselves as human vegetables. No one can be happy who does not find some channel for this creative energy.

When we suggest creative activities to neurotic individuals we are usually met with the objection that they have no artistic talent, no time, or no inclination. "I have never done anything like that!" Often they call attention to the fact that there are already so many experts that they cannot compete. Herein lies their psychological difficulty. It is not necessary to compete with the greatest sculptors of all time. It is quite possible to get a great deal of pleasure and recreation simply from attempting to model the head of your janitor or your wife in plasticene. It is not necessary to be a Rembrandt to get fun in drawing the types in the subway or in your office.

Hobbies there are without end. They are one of the most effective forms of insurance against the boredom of old age or the heavy artillery of adversity. No man can afford to be without a hobby, and so long as his hobbies are subordinate to his lifework, the more hobbies the better. There is hardly a device which is such an effective prophylaxis against subjectivity or melancholia as a hobby, it matters not whether you cultivate double dahlias or raise fighting fish. The wise man has a variety of avocations—outdoor hobbies and indoor, summer and winter ones, social and solitary forms of amusing himself in his leisure moments. No one with a good hobby is ever lonely for a long time. A good hobby is one of the best possible bridges between the social and the vocational worlds.

One of the essential differences between the mentally immature and the emotionally adult, lies in their attitude toward perfection. In that most philosophic and human of books, *The Crock of Gold*, James Ste-

phens lets one of his philosophers say: "Finality is death. Perfection is finality. Nothing is perfect. There are lumps in it!" Perfection is a curse, and the cult of perfection, that is, living according to the motto of "one hundred per cent or nothing" constricts men and women to the narrowest spheres of isolation. Perfectionism is the blinker that keeps many a man on the path of failure. Only in the child's world or in the cosmology of the savage and the neurotic do the finalities of "all or none," of "either—or," of "large or small," "right or wrong," exist as veritable entities.

In the world of mature men there are no finalities. Everything is relative. The emotionally mature adult lives according to the law of "Both . . . and!" For the romantically infantile, fixed and absolute standards of right and wrong exist, but the completely adult individual realizes that right and wrong are elastic conventions, variable with time and place and circumstance. He seeks to understand, rather than to label. He seeks to join together in creative inventiveness rather than to disjoin in romantic idealism.

This realization leads to important conclusions with regard to the technique of living. There are people who cannot bear to be in the wrong. They must have the last word at all costs. Their insistence either intimidates their adversaries into submission or arouses their natural resistance. We see the most bitter and unnecessary controversies arising from the attempts of neurotics to prove their point at all costs. It is an almost universal observance that the more noise a man makes in an argument or discussion, the greater the likelihood that he is in the wrong and that he has to bolster the weakness of his arguments by the loudness of his protestations.

Peaceful, social intercourse can exist only in a society of mentally mature individuals. You can achieve a great deal of happiness and an enormous host of friends if you will incorporate the wisdom of social relativity not only into your major vital activities but also into your most unimportant conversations. Remember that your neighbor is likely to be just as discouraged as you. If you wish to convince him of a point or teach him a new technique, minimize the distance between your superior position of knowledge and his inferior position of ignorance. No one

likes to be inferior, no one enjoys ignorance. You will find the greatest souls among men the most modest, the best teachers among those who get "down on the floor" with their pupils. Conscious modesty in attitude, quietness in gesture, combined with firmness of purpose and decision, mark the well-adjusted adult.

To this end it is wise to eschew all words of finality and superiority. The words, absolutely, certainly, always, never, and the like have little place in the vocabulary of the happy man. If after mature thought and consideration you really believe in the truth of a certain proposition, and wish to convey it to another, it is always best to put it in such a form that your listener can accept your word without losing his self-esteem. To this end it is sometimes the part of wisdom to wink at the truth.

If a belligerent neurotic shakes his fist in your face and tells you that horses have three legs, and you know from experience that horses have four legs, it will not help your argument to shout back at him and tell him that he is irrevocably wrong. It is better to say: "I agree with you and your excellent experience. In the great majority of cases horses do have three legs, but to my mind, in this particular instance, this chestnut mare has four legs!" In nine cases out of ten you will gain your point and win a friend.

Trivial quibbles about right and wrong are most apt to occur between parents and children, between husbands and wives, and between business partners, and in our experience nothing is so well calculated to upset good social relations as a useless argument. If these arguments cannot be entirely avoided, we caution those who would be happy to allow their opponents to have their say, agree with them completely, and then proceed to do what they think right without any further comment. Usually controversial actions are not nearly so soul-destroying as the conversations that accompany, precede, or follow them as "post-mortems."

If you are dealing with an individual with an exaggerated Jehovah complex, let him play Jehovah to his heart's content, and bend your energies to the more objective task of getting out of his environment. Usually the Jehovah complex is manifested in minor matters, because

few men can carry their ideas of omniscience or infallibility into the major spheres of human activity. It is better to concede, to smile, and to run away. Here surely discretion is the equivalent of social valor.

Remember that in twenty-five years it will make very little difference whether you smoked only ten cigarettes a day as your father desired or forty as you wished, that no one will remember whether you drove your golf ball into the bunker at the fifth hole or laid it up to the green, whether you should have spent only ten dollars for a pair of dancing pumps, or whether you were wrong to kiss Mrs. Smith in her husband's presence. Develop a stoic disregard for trifles, and extend your horizons to such a scope that trifles can never affect the even tenor of your pursuit of worthwhile goals.

One important source of unhappiness is the habit of putting off living to some fictional future date. Men and women are constantly making themselves unhappy because in deferring their lives to the future they lose sight of the present and its golden opportunities for rich living. "When I have ten thousand dollars in the bank I'll take a trip to Europe!" Why not go to Europe in the student third class *now*, and enjoy life while you are young? "When I am thirty-five years old I will marry!" Why not marry now, and have the fun of struggling for some common objective in comradely cooperation with your wife? "When I am married, I'll settle down and do some serious reading!" Why not budget one good book a month during your celibate days? "If I had more time I'd study interior decoration!" Why not go to fewer movies and play less bridge and spend two nights a week studying? "I'd like to collect etchings but I haven't the money now!" Why not study the exhibits and collections in the galleries? It is more fun to have a love and acquaintanceship for great works of art than it is to have them lying in a portfolio gathering dust while you are making more money to buy more etchings.

If we defer living too long, unfortunate intercurrent events frequently spoil our plans and change our aims. Sometimes we grow so old that our former goals lose their glamor with the result that we are left high

and dry *sans* objectives, and *sans* the joy of living. We have often heard disconsolate and disaffected adults complain, "Oh, if I had only learned to play the piano when I was young!" While it is our belief that it is never too late to begin anything—and we have ample evidence to prove that we really learn better when we are mature, as witness John Stuart Mill beginning the study of Greek at the age of seventy—most of the excuses and alibis that people make during their maturity really mask their fear of not reaching a high stage of perfection. And perfection is death.

For those who would be happy while they are alive, the importance of developing their curiosity and their sense of adventure while their faculties are sharp should be apparent. Hunger, love and curiosity are probably the most irresistible of human urges, and life without adventure is a pallid life indeed. Take a chance! Buy a new picture for your room, enroll in a new course, take that trip you have so long planned, even though you cannot do it *de luxe*, as you desired: Buy that automobile even though it is a second hand Ford! Sit in the gallery and see that play, or listen to that concert! Do not defer life. The dividends of too much caution and security are boredom and smugness. It is better to have adventured in life, and made mistakes, than to have petrified, in mind and body, in the secure depths of an easy chair, with a horizon bounded by your office, the daily paper, and the four walls of your home. Only the dead know complete security.

One of the chief differences between the life pattern of the child and that of the adult is the element of planfulness. The mentally mature individual develops a plan of conduct, a grand strategy of living which consists not only of an immediate plan of attack on the problems of the present but a secondary scheme for maintaining the position gained in maturity throughout old age. The child (whether in age or in mental immaturity) lives a planless life. His strategy consists either in "muddling through" or "dreaming through" life.

It must be apparent that the chances of happiness are much greater when an individual makes provision for his old age during his maturity.

The socially responsible, mature individual cannot bear the thought of reverting to the helplessness of childhood when the relatively greater helplessness of old age will affect him, whereas the grasshopper characters among men, never having outgrown their childhood, place their faith in God, in society, or in luck and make no responsible provision for their last years. Happiness is impossible for the adult-in-body-child-in-mind individual because his whole character is an anachronism. Just as precocious children miss the fruits of childhood, so the mentally immature forego the usufructs of adult life. The planlessness of their lives is evidence of their lack of self-confidence and self-respect and an indication of their disbelief in their own ability to meet the obstacles of life and conquer them.

The quest of happiness is not conceivable without a definite plan both for the present and the future. Everyone should develop activities in his youth and early maturity which will carry over into the period of old age. The tragedies of men and women who have outlived their usefulness, and are tolerated by their children or other workers about them who grudgingly support them, can never be understood by any except the old. Many of these old men and women who have grown to ripe years but have retained their childish concepts of the world because they have not grown and developed with the world about them, assiduously devote themselves to the mischief of pampering their grandchildren or injecting discord into the lives of their children. You need not fear old age if you have invested sufficiently in the social graces and avocations. When these investments mature they continue to bring dividends of happiness and satisfaction even when your physical powers have begun to wane.

The best insurance against melancholia, depression, and a sense of futility in old age is the development of wide horizons and the cultivation of mental elasticity and interest in the world. Unlike the flesh, the spirit does not decay with the years. Many of the happiest individuals in the world are men and women in their sixties, seventies, or eighties, who have contributed richly to the world's work during their maturity, and at the same time have cultivated sufficient awareness and interest in the undying cultural activities to make their leisure a delight. By



contrast, those tragi-comic figures of men and women who are trying to keep young at all costs, seem pitiful. We have seen women of fifty and sixty torturing their flesh in order to fool themselves into the belief that they are still young. Others go through obscene and vulgar sexual or social contortions to vainly prove that they have not lost their youth. We have seen seventy-year-old men with arteries like pipestems trying to compete with college boys in tennis until they dropped dead of apoplexy, simply because they could not look the reality of old age in the face.

Millions of dollars are spent annually in the United States alone by women who, when they should be enjoying the legato of happy old age, rush around from masseur to beautician and back again, in a panicky attempt to prove that they are still young. Neither face-lifting, flashy clothes, heavy drinking, sexual orgies, or social over-activity can dupe nature. These temporary devices, in the end, do not even deceive the faded and jaded women who use them. The more hectic the attempt to prove youth in the face of sagging tissues and hardened arteries, the more tragic the spectacle, the more intolerable the situation, the greater the danger of a complete mental and physical breakdown of the personality. The reckless quest of speed, power, youth, or vitality leads first to the open arms of the charlatan, to the embrace of the sneering gigolo, to the incense-reeking parlors of the suave and oleaginous yogi, and eventually to the sanitarium and to the grave.

It is really as if youth were a beautiful house in which we have been invited to sojourn temporarily. Delightful as our week-end may have been, it is both tactful and right that we should pack our things and be on our way and off to our work before our host becomes restless and is compelled to make false excuses to speed our parting. Maturation and senescence of body and mind are inexorable laws of nature. We cannot escape from the final truth that we all grow old and die. It is better therefore, to be philosophic about this fact, and to prepare to make the long reaches of maturity interesting and peaceful. To do this we must learn the fine art of growing old gracefully.

To grow old gracefully requires a maximum of that form of objectivity we call "a sense of humor." The man or woman who has found

his focus of satisfaction within himself during the whole of his youth and early maturity finds it very difficult to face the problems of old age and death with any equanimity. This is one of the facts that no neurotic dares to face. Every egoist moreover, hopes that some extraordinary Providence will look out for the exigencies of his old age.

Clinical practice indicates that this hope is unfounded because the only really happy old people are those who have tasted the satisfactions of a good job well done in the past, at the same time that they exhibit a lively interest in some avocation as a means of making their time of lessened activity, rich and meaningful in the future. The older men grow the more they realize that it is only by putting the focus of their activities in some movement or activity greater than their individual ego, that they can attain peace and security in old age.

This truth is especially applicable to the woman who is inclined to make the important work of raising her children her only profession, only to find that these children, too, mature, and grow out of their dependency, leaving their over-solicitous and over-protective mother a mere shadow of a human being without a good reason for living. The necessity of interesting herself in some extra-familial activities should be apparent to every woman who does not consciously desire to raise a brood of neurotic and dependent children for the express purpose of being a martyr to their adult infantilisms at a time when she should be secure in the friendships and activities of her contemporaries. Many women unconsciously keep their children infantile because they themselves are afraid to look at a future in which they have no cogent activities either to fill their leisure or to occupy their energies.

Growing old gracefully should begin with youth. No one who intends to lead a happy old age should neglect the adventure of books, of music, of dancing and the other arts, and above all, the art of social intercourse. The last of life, as Browning has so well put it, is the goal of youth. How can one be happy, then, looking always at the lost paradise of youth and denying the reality for which we were created? This problem is the more pressing because more and more people grow to a ripe old age nowadays than ever before, as our insurance companies indicate in their tables.

Modern medicine has increased the span of life, and the economic structure of society has lessened the number of working hours and increased the number of enforced holidays. If we do not simultaneously increase our interest in living, it would really be better to scrap our public health activities and let men and women die in the height of their maturity. Too many people live as if their lives were to be snuffed out at fifty. And while they make certain provisions for their animal care, by taking out insurance policies when they are young, they seldom take out mental insurance in the form of a lively investment in the cultural and artistic activities which give life its fullest meaning. The problem of making adequate use of leisure no longer affects only the plutocrat. The machine age has made it every man's problem.

The dim realization that we live longer and have more leisure has stimulated that excellent movement known as adult education. In the old paternalistic and authoritarian cultures, school was an unpleasant period of stupid preparations to take examinations and to get a diploma. As soon as the be-ribboned diploma was properly framed, education ceased. But the artist in living must never stop learning. The individual who would grow old gracefully must be constantly fortifying himself with new ideas and new interests. You cannot coast through life on the momentum of a high school or even of a college education.

Life teaches us much, but we must learn and learn and learn. To stop, even for a moment, in the pursuit of knowledge and in the search for new and greater awareness is to bring mental death closer. We petrify all too soon. We can at least intelligently protract our personal usefulness and our individual interest in life by searching forever for new worlds to conquer. Those who live in the larger urban centers will find many opportunities for adult education. Those who live in communities which do not as yet offer facilities for adult education possess the facilities of the extension courses of the greater universities. And in the last analysis, men and women who live in towns deprived of all cultural advantages can become the pioneers of adult education in their own communities and thus find a valuable social activity helpful not only to themselves but to their neighbors.

Despite the obvious neuroticizing tendencies of modern life, we can

console ourselves with the thought that never before in the history of the world has life been so eminently worth living, and never before so thrilling. The morning newspaper and the monthly magazine are a veritable storehouse of challenges and stimuli. Never before has the opportunity for living life at a high conscious and intellectual level been so apparent. Never before have there been so many profoundly important causes crying for intelligent social cooperation from adult men and women. Never before has the challenge of living fully been so clear. You can hardly name a sphere of human activity, be it transportation or international peace, be it economics or sociology, be it commerce or medicine, politics or philosophy, in which old values are not tumbling, in which there is not a cry for leaders and for soldiers in a good cause.

One could almost close his eyes and put his finger on the morning newspaper at random, or open the encyclopaedia to a chance page and immediately find a worthwhile cause. The world is sick of its mistakes, it is hungry for peace and brotherhood. We stand at the crossroads as never before in the written history of the world. One road leads definitely toward that brotherhood of man which has been the goal of every religious and philosophic movement of the past. One road leads to the very destruction of mankind by war and competition. We can choose consciously. Mankind must make civilization work for mankind if we are not to be destroyed by the Frankenstein we have created. No one need ever be unhappy who sees this task clearly, who looks to his resources, who goes forward, singing, to the accomplishment of the greatest task of all, the establishment of a practical brotherhood of man.

What shall we say of adversity, of the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" that beset us in the course of our studies in the art of living? Two schools of thought exist with reference to misfortune. Many pray nightly that life's difficulties be kept from their path. "Lead us not into temptation" runs their prayer. It seems highly problematical if any secure happiness can be attained by running away from temptation, discord, pain, disappointment. Since these things exist in the life of everyone, it seems wiser to counsel a stoic philosophy.

Not freedom from temptation but a serene fortitude in the face of disappointment and chagrin should be our goal. If you have evaded

all unpleasantness in life your happiness is placed in unstable equilibrium by the constant dread that some unavoidable disappointment is just around the corner. If you have faced pain and disappointment, you not only value your happiness more highly, but you are prepared for unpredictable exigencies. Just as we can immunize ourselves against certain bodily diseases by stimulating our reserves to over-activity by taking graduated doses of toxin into our bodies, so can we immunize ourselves against adversity by meeting and facing the unavoidable chagrins of life, as they occur. There may be happy human vegetables who have succeeded in avoiding unhappiness and pain, but they cannot call themselves men.

### EPICURUS, 341-270 B.C.

Greek philosopher who defined philosophy as  
the art of making life happy

LET NO ONE when young delay to study philosophy, nor when he is old grow weary of his study. For no one can come too early or too late to secure the health of his soul. And the man who says that the age for philosophy has either not yet come or has gone by is like the man who says that the age for happiness is not yet come to him, or has passed away. Wherefore both when young and old a man must study philosophy, that as he grows old he may be young in blessings through the grateful recollection of what has been, and that in youth he may be old as well, since he will know no fear of what is to come. We must then meditate on the things that make our happiness, seeing that when that is with us we have all, but when it is absent we do all to win it.

The things which I used unceasingly to commend to you, these do and practice, considering them to be the first principles of the good life. First of all believe that god is a being immortal and blessed, even as the common idea of a god is engraved on men's minds, and do not assign to him anything alien to his immortality or ill-suited to his

blessedness: but believe about him everything that can uphold his blessedness and immortality. For gods there are, since the knowledge of them is by clear vision. But they are not such as the many believe them to be: for indeed they do not consistently represent them as they believe them to be. And the impious man is not he who denies the gods of the many, but he who attaches to the gods the beliefs of the many. For the statements of the many about the gods are not conceptions derived from sensation, but false suppositions, according to which the greatest misfortunes befall the wicked and the greatest blessings, the good, by the gift of the gods. For men being accustomed always to their own virtues welcome those like themselves, but regard all that is not of their nature as alien.

Become accustomed to the belief that death is nothing to us. For all good and evil consists in sensation, but death is deprivation of sensation. And therefore a right understanding that death is nothing to us makes the mortality of life enjoyable, not because it adds to it an infinite span of time, but because it takes away the craving for immortality. For there is nothing terrible in life for the man who has truly comprehended that there is nothing terrible in not living. So that the man speaks but idly who says that he fears death not because it will be painful when it comes, but because it is painful in anticipation. For that which gives no trouble when it comes, is but an empty pain in anticipation. So death, the most terrifying of ills, is nothing to us, since so long as we exist, death is not with us; but when death comes, then we do not exist. It does not then concern either the living or the dead, since for the former it is not, and the latter are no more.

But the many at one moment shun death as the greatest of evils, at another yearn for it as a respite from the evils in life. But the wise man neither seeks to escape life nor fears the cessation of life, for neither does life offend him nor does the absence of life seem to be any evil. And just as with food he does not seek simply the larger share and nothing else, but rather the most pleasant, so he seeks to enjoy not the longest period of time, but the most pleasant.

And he who counsels the young man to live well, but the old man to make a good end, is foolish, not merely because of the desirability

of life, but also because it is the same training which teaches to live well and to die well. Yet much worse still is the man who says it is good not to be born, but "once born make haste to pass the gates of Death." For if he says this from conviction why does he not pass away out of life? For it is open to him to do so, if he had firmly made up his mind to this. But if he speaks in jest, his words are idle among men who cannot receive them.

We must then bear in mind that the future is neither ours, nor yet wholly not ours, so that we may not altogether expect it as sure to come, nor abandon hope of it, as if it will certainly not come.

We must consider that of desires some are natural, others vain, and of the natural some are necessary and others merely natural; and of the necessary some are necessary for happiness, others for the repose of the body, and others for very life. The right understanding of these facts enables us to refer all choice and avoidance to the health of the body and the soul's freedom from disturbance, since this is the aim of the life of blessedness. For it is to obtain this end that we always act, namely to avoid pain and fear. And when this is once secured for us, all the tempest of the soul is dispersed, since the living creature has not to wander as though in search of something that is missing, and to look for some other thing by which he can fulfill the good of the soul and the good of the body. For it is then that we have need of pleasure, when we feel pain owing to the absence of pleasure; but when we do not feel pain, we no longer need pleasure. And for this cause we call pleasure the beginning and end of the blessed life. For we recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance, and to pleasure we return again, using the feeling as the standard by which we judge every good.

And since pleasure is the first good and natural to us, for this very reason we do not choose every pleasure, but some times we pass over many pleasures, when greater discomfort accrues to us as the result of them: and similarly we think many pains better than pleasures, since a greater pleasure comes to us when we have endured pains for a long time. Every pleasure then because of its natural kinship to us is good, yet not every pleasure is to be chosen: even as every pain also is an evil,

yet not all are always of a nature to be avoided. Yet by a scale of comparison and by the consideration of advantages and disadvantages we must form our judgment on all these matters. For the good on certain occasions we treat as bad, and conversely the bad as good.

And again independence of desire we think a great good—not that we may at all times enjoy but a few things; but that, if we do not possess many, we may enjoy the few in the genuine persuasion that those have the sweetest pleasure in luxury who least need it, and that all that is natural is easy to be obtained, but that which is superfluous is hard. And so plain savours bring us a pleasure equal to a luxurious diet, when all the pain due to want is removed; and bread and water produce the highest pleasure, when one who needs them puts them to his lips. To grow accustomed therefore to simple and not luxurious diet gives us health to the full, and makes a man alert for the needful employments of life, and when after long intervals we approach luxuries disposes us better towards them, and fits us to be fearless of fortune.

When, therefore, we maintain that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasures of profligates and those that consist in sensuality, as is supposed by some who are either ignorant or disagree with us or do not understand, but freedom from pain in the body and from trouble in the mind. For it is not continuous drinkings and revellings, nor the satisfaction of lusts, nor the enjoyment of fish and other luxuries of the wealthy table, which produce a pleasant life, but the sober reasoning, searching out the motives for all choice and avoidance, and banishing mere opinions, to which are due the greatest disturbance of the spirit.

Of all this the beginning and the greatest good is prudence. Wherefore prudence is a more precious thing even than philosophy: for from prudence are sprung all the other virtues, and it teaches us that it is not possible to live pleasantly without living prudently and honourably and justly, nor, again, to live a life of prudence, honour and justice without living pleasantly. For the virtues are by nature bound up with the pleasant life, and the pleasant life is inseparable from them. For indeed who, think you, is a better man than he who holds reverent opinions concerning the gods, and is at all times free from fear of death, and has reasoned out the end ordained by nature? He understands that the



limit of good things is easy to fulfill and easy to attain, whereas the course of ills is either short in time or slight in pain: he laughs at destiny, whom some have introduced as the mistress of all things. He thinks that with us lies the chief power in determining events, some of which happen by necessity and some by chance, and some are within our control; for while necessity cannot be called to account, he sees that chance is inconstant, but that which is in our control is subject to no master, and to it are naturally attached praise and blame. For, indeed, it were better to follow the myths about the gods than to become a slave to the destiny of the natural philosophers: for the former suggests a hope of placating the gods by worship, whereas the latter involves a necessity which knows no placation. As to chance, he does not regard it as a god as most men do, for in a god's acts there is no disorder, nor as an uncertain cause of all things: for he does not believe that good and evil are given by chance to man for the framing of a blessed life, but that opportunities for great good and great evil are afforded by it. He therefore thinks it better to be unfortunate in reasonable action than to prosper in unreason. For it is better in a man's actions that what is well chosen should fail, rather than that what is ill chosen should be successful owing to chance.

Meditate therefore on these things and things akin to them night and day by yourself, and with a companion like to yourself, and never shall you be disturbed waking or asleep, but you shall live like a god among men. For a man who lives among immortal blessings is not like to a mortal being.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1803-82

American poet, essayist and philosopher

TO FILL THE hour—that is happiness; to fill the hour and leave no crevice for a repentance or an approval. We live amid surfaces, and the true art of life is to skate well on them. Under the oldest, mouldiest

conventions a man of native force prospers just as well as in the newest world, and that by skill of handling and treatment. He can take hold anywhere. Life itself is a mixture of power and form, and will not bear the least excess of either. To finish the moment, to find the journey's end in every step of the road, to live the greatest number of good hours, is wisdom. It is not the part of men, but of fanatics, or of mathematicians if you will, to say that, the shortness of life considered, it is not worth caring whether for so short a duration we were sprawling in want or sitting high. Since our office is with moments, let us husband them. Five minutes of today are worth as much to me as five minutes in the next millennium. Let us be poised, and wise, and our own, today. Let us treat men and women well; treat them as if they were real; perhaps they are. Men live in their fancy, like drunkards whose hands are too soft and tremulous for successful labor.

It is a tempest of fancies, and the only ballast I know is a respect to the present hour. Without any shadow of doubt, amidst this vertigo of shows and politics, I settle myself ever the firmer in the creed that we should not postpone and refer and wish, but do broad justice where we are, by whomsoever we deal with, accepting our actual companions and circumstances, however humble or odious, as the mystic officials to whom the universe has delegated its whole pleasure for us. If these are mean and malignant, their contentment, which is the last victory of justice, is a more satisfying echo to the heart than the voice of poets and the casual sympathy of admirable persons. I think that however a thoughtful man may suffer from the defects and absurdities of his company, he cannot without affectation deny to any set of men and women a sensibility to extraordinary merit. The coarse and frivolous have an instinct of superiority, if they have not a sympathy, and honor it in their blind capricious way with sincere homage.

The fine young people despise life, but in me, and in such as with me are free from dyspepsia, and to whom a day is a sound and solid good, it is a great excess of politeness to look scornful and to cry for company. I am grown by sympathy a little eager and sentimental, but leave me alone and I should relish every hour and what it brought me, the potluck of the day, as heartily as the oldest gossip in the bar-room. I am thankful

for small mercies. I compared notes with one of my friends who expects everything of the universe and is disappointed when anything is less than the best, and I found that I begin at the other extreme, expecting nothing, and am always full of thanks for moderate goods. I accept the clangor and jangle of contrary tendencies. I find my account in sots and bores also. They give a reality to the circumjacent picture which such a vanishing meteorous appearance can ill spare. In the morning I awake and find the old world, wife, babies and mother, Concord and Boston, the dear old spiritual world and even the dear old devil not far off. If we will take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have heaping measures. The great gifts are not got by analysis. Everything good is on the highway.

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*The Rewards of Life*  
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BERTRAND RUSSELL, 1872-

English philosopher, mathematician and author

ANIMALS ARE HAPPY so long as they have health and enough to eat. Human beings, one feels, ought to be, but they are not, at least in a great majority of cases. If you are unhappy yourself, you will probably be prepared to admit that you are not exceptional in this. If you are happy, ask yourself how many of your friends are so. And when you have reviewed your friends, teach yourself the art of reading faces; make yourself receptive to the moods of those whom you meet in the course of an ordinary day.

A mark in every face I meet,  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe

says Blake. Though the kinds are different, you will find that unhappiness meets you everywhere. Stand in a busy street during working hours, or on a main thoroughfare at a week-end, or at a dance of an evening; empty your mind of your own ego and let the personalities of the strangers about you take possession of you one after another. You will find that each of these different crowds has its own trouble. In the work-hour crowd you will see anxiety, excessive concentration, dyspepsia, lack of interest in anything but the struggle, incapacity for play, unconsciousness of their fellow creatures. On a main road at the week-end, you will see men and women, all comfortably off, and some very rich, engaged in the pursuit of pleasure. This pursuit is conducted by

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all at a uniform pace, that of the slowest car in the procession; it is impossible to see the road for the cars, or the scenery since looking aside would cause an accident; all the occupants of all the cars are absorbed in the desire to pass other cars, which they cannot do on account of the crowd; if their minds wander from this preoccupation, as will happen occasionally to those who are not themselves driving, unutterable boredom seizes upon them and stamps their features with trivial discontent. Once in a way a carload of colored people will show genuine enjoyment, but will cause indignation by erratic behavior, and ultimately get into the hands of the police owing to an accident: enjoyment in holiday time is illegal.

Or again, watch people at a gay evening. All come determined to be happy, with the kind of grim resolve with which one determines not to make a fuss at the dentist's. It is held that drink and petting are the gateways to joy, so people get drunk quickly and try not to notice how much their partners disgust them. After a sufficient amount of drink, men begin to weep, and to lament how unworthy they are, morally, of the devotion of their mothers. All that alcohol does for them is to liberate the sense of sin, which reason suppresses in saner moments.

The causes of these various kinds of unhappiness lie partly in the social system, partly in individual psychology—which, of course, is itself to a considerable extent a product of the social system. I have written before about the changes in the social system required to promote happiness. Concerning the abolition of war, of economic exploitation, of education in cruelty and fear, it is not my intention to speak in this volume. To discover a system for the avoidance of war is a vital need of our civilization; but no such system has a chance while men are so unhappy that mutual extermination seems to them less dreadful than continued endurance of the light of day. To prevent the perpetuation of poverty is necessary if the benefits of machine production are to accrue in any degree to those most in need of them; but what is the use of making everybody rich if the rich themselves are miserable? Education in cruelty and fear is bad, but no other kind can be given by those who are themselves the slaves of these passions. These considerations lead us to the problem of the individual: what can a man or woman,

here and now, in the midst of our nostalgic society, do to achieve happiness for himself or herself? In discussing this problem, I shall confine my attention to those who are not subject to any extreme cause of outward misery. I shall assume a sufficient health to make ordinary bodily activities possible. I shall not consider the great catastrophes, such as loss of all one's children, or public disgrace. There are things to be said about such matters, and they are important things, but they belong to a different order from the things that I wish to say. My purpose is to suggest a cure for the ordinary day-to-day unhappiness from which most people in civilized countries suffer, and which is all the more unbearable because, having no obvious external cause, it appears inescapable. I believe this unhappiness to be very largely due to mistaken views of the world, mistaken ethics, mistaken habits of life, leading to destruction of that natural zest and appetite for possible things upon which all happiness, whether of men or animals, ultimately depends. These are matters which lie within the power of the individual, and I propose to suggest the change by which his happiness, given average good fortune, may be achieved.

Perhaps the best introduction to the philosophy which I wish to advocate will be a few words of autobiography. I was not born happy. As a child, my favorite hymn was: "Weary of earth and laden with my sin." At the age of five, I reflected that, if I should live to be seventy, I had only endured, so far, a fourteenth part of my whole life, and I felt the long-spread-out boredom ahead of me to be almost unendurable. In adolescence, I hated life and was continually on the verge of suicide, from which, however, I was restrained by the desire to know more mathematics. Now, on the contrary, I enjoy life; I might almost say that with every year that passes I enjoy it more. This is due partly to having discovered what were the things that I most desired, and having gradually acquired many of these things. Partly it is due to having successfully dismissed certain objects of desire—such as the acquisition of indubitable knowledge about something or other—as essentially unattainable. But very largely it is due to a diminishing preoccupation with myself. Like others who had a Puritan education, I had the habit of meditating on my sins, follies, and shortcomings. I seemed to myself—

no doubt justly—a miserable specimen. Gradually I learned to be indifferent to myself and my deficiencies; I came to center my attention increasingly upon external objects: the state of the world, various branches of knowledge, individuals for whom I felt affection. External interests, it is true, bring each its own possibility of pain: the world may be plunged in war, knowledge in some direction may be hard to achieve, friends may die. But pains of these kinds do not destroy the essential quality of life, as do those that spring from disgust with self. And every external interest inspires some activity which, so long as the interest remains alive, is a complete preventive of ennui. Interest in oneself, on the contrary, leads to no activity of a progressive kind. It may lead to the keeping of a diary, to getting psychoanalyzed, or perhaps to becoming a monk. But the monk will not be happy until the routine of the monastery has made him forget his own soul. The happiness which he attributes to religion he could have obtained from becoming a crossing-sweeper, provided he were compelled to remain one. External discipline is the only road to happiness for those unfortunates whose self-absorption is too profound to be cured in any other way.

Self-absorption is of various kinds. We may take the sinner, the narcissist, the megalomaniac as three very common types.

When I speak of "the sinner," I do not mean the man who commits sins: sins are committed by every one or no one, according to our definition of the word. I mean the man who is absorbed in the consciousness of sin. This man is perpetually incurring his own disapproval, which, if he is religious, he interprets as the disapproval of God. He has an image of himself as he thinks he ought to be, which is in continual conflict with his knowledge of himself as he is. If, in his conscious thought, he has long since discarded the maxims that he was taught at his mother's knee, his sense of sin may be buried deep in his unconscious, and only emerge when he is drunk or asleep. Nevertheless it may suffice to take the savor out of everything. At bottom he still accepts all the prohibitions he was taught in infancy. Swearing is wicked; drinking is wicked; ordinary business shrewdness is wicked; above all, sex is wicked. He does not, of course, abstain from any of these pleasures, but they are all poisoned for him by the feeling that they degrade him. The one pleasure

that he desires with his whole soul is that of being approvingly caressed by his mother, which he can remember having experienced in childhood. This pleasure being no longer open to him, he feels that nothing matters; since he must sin, he decides to sin deeply. When he falls in love, he looks for maternal tenderness, but cannot accept it, because, owing to the mother-image, he feels no respect for any woman with whom he has sexual relations. Then, in his disappointment, he becomes cruel, repents of his cruelty, and starts afresh on the dreary round of imagined sin and real apparently hard-boiled reprobates. What drives them astray is devotion to an unattainable object (mother or mother-substitute) together with the inculcation, in early years, of a ridiculous ethical code. Liberation from the tyranny of early beliefs and affections is the first step towards happiness for these victims of maternal "virtue."

Narcissism is, in a sense, the converse of an habitual sense of sin; it consists in the habit of admiring oneself and wishing to be admired. Up to a point it is, of course, normal, and not to be deplored; it is only in its excesses that it becomes a grave evil. In many women, especially rich society women, the capacity for feeling love is completely dried up, and is replaced by a powerful desire that all men should love them. When a woman of this kind is sure that a man loves her, she has no further use for him. The same thing occurs, though less frequently, with men; the classic example is the hero of that remarkable novel *Liaisons Dangereuses*, which describes the love affairs of French aristocrats just before the Revolution. When vanity is carried to this height, there is no genuine interest in any other person, and therefore no real satisfaction to be obtained from love. Other interests fail even more disastrously. A narcissist, for example, inspired by the homage paid to great painters, may become an art student; but, as painting is for him a mere means to an end, the technique never becomes interesting, and no subject can be seen except in relation to self. The result is failure and disappointment, with ridicule instead of the expected adulation. The same thing applies to those novelists whose novels always have themselves idealized as heroines. All serious success in work depends upon some genuine interest in the material with which the work is concerned. The tragedy of one successful politician after another is the gradual substitution of narcissism for



an interest in the community and the measures for which he stands. The man who is only interested in himself is not admirable, and is not felt to be so. Consequently the man whose sole concern with the world is that it shall admire him is not likely to achieve his object. But even if he does, he will not be completely happy, since human instinct is never completely self-centered, and the narcissist is limiting himself artificially just as truly as is the man dominated by a sense of sin. The primitive man might be proud of being a good hunter, but he also enjoyed the activity of the chase. Vanity, when it passes beyond a point, kills pleasure in every activity for its own sake, and thus leads inevitably to listlessness and boredom. Often its source is diffidence, and its cure lies in the growth of self-respect. But this is only to be gained by successful activity inspired by objective interests.

The megalomaniac differs from the narcissist by the fact that he wishes to be powerful rather than charming, and seeks to be feared rather than loved. To this type belong many lunatics and most of the great men in history. Love of power, like vanity, is a strong element in normal human nature, and as such is to be accepted; it becomes deplorable only when it is excessive or associated with an insufficient sense of reality. Where this occurs, it makes a man unhappy or foolish, if not both. The lunatic who thinks he is a crowned head may be, in a sense, happy, but his happiness is not of a kind that any sane person would envy. Alexander the Great was psychologically of the same type as the lunatic, though he possessed the talent to achieve the lunatic's dream. He could not, however, achieve his own dream, which enlarged its scope as his achievement grew. When it became clear that he was the greatest conqueror known to fame, he decided that he was a god. Was he a happy man? His drunkenness, his furious rages, his indifference to women, and his claim to divinity, suggest that he was not. There is no ultimate satisfaction in the cultivation of one element of human nature at the expense of all the others, nor in viewing all the world as raw material for the magnificence of one's own ego. Usually the megalomaniac, whether insane or nominally sane, is the product of some excessive humiliation. Napoleon suffered at school from in-

feriority to his schoolfellows, who were rich aristocrats, while he was a penurious scholarship boy. When he allowed the return of the émigrés, he had the satisfaction of seeing his former schoolfellows bowing down before him. What bliss! Yet it led to the wish to obtain a similar satisfaction at the expense of the Czar, and this led to Saint Helena. Since no man can be omnipotent, a life dominated wholly by love of power can hardly fail, sooner or later, to meet with obstacles that cannot be overcome. The knowledge that this is so can be prevented from obtruding on consciousness only by some form of lunacy, though if a man is sufficiently great he can imprison or execute those who point this out to him. Repressions in the political and in the psychoanalytic senses thus go hand in hand. And wherever psychoanalytic repression in any marked form takes place, there is no genuine happiness. Power kept within its proper bounds may add greatly to happiness, but as the sole end of life it leads to disaster, inwardly if not outwardly.

The psychological causes of unhappiness, it is clear, are many and various. But all have something in common. The typical unhappy man is one who, having been deprived in youth of some normal satisfaction more than any other, has therefore given to his life a one-sided direction, together with a quite undue emphasis upon the achievement as opposed to the activities connected with it. There is, however, a further development which is very common in the present day. A man may feel so completely thwarted that he seeks no form of satisfaction, but only distraction and oblivion. He then becomes a devotee of "pleasure." That is to say, he seeks to make life bearable by becoming less alive. Drunkenness, for example, is temporary suicide: the happiness that it brings is merely negative, a momentary cessation of unhappiness. The narcissist and the megalomaniac believe that happiness is possible, though they may adopt mistaken means of achieving it; but the man who seeks intoxication, in whatever form, has given up hope except in oblivion. In his case, the first thing to be done is to persuade him that happiness is desirable. Men who are unhappy, like men who sleep badly, are always proud of the fact. Perhaps their pride is like that of the fox who had lost his tail; if so, the way to cure it is to point out to them how

they can grow a new tail. Very few men, I believe, will deliberately choose unhappiness if they see a way of being happy. I do not deny that such men exist, but they are not sufficiently numerous to be important.

### CONFUCIUS, 551-478 B.C.

Celebrated sage and Chinese philosopher. His ethics are his chief contribution to Chinese religion.

HEAVEN PROTECTS, ESTABLISHES thee with the greatest security, makes thee entirely virtuous that thou mayest enjoy every happiness. It grants thee all excellences. It sends down to thee long-enduring happiness, which the days are not sufficient to enjoy. With coarse food to eat, water to drink, and a bent arm for a pillow—even in such a state I could be happy; for, wealth and honor obtained unworthily are to me as a fleeting cloud.

### ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER, 1788-1860

German philosopher and chief exponent of the philosophy of pessimism. Schopenhauer was one of the most lucid of writers and influential of thinkers.

ARISTOTLE DIVIDES THE blessings of life into three classes—those which come to us from without, those of the soul, and those of the body. Keeping nothing of this division but the number, I observe that the fundamental differences in human lot may be reduced to three distinct classes:

(1) What a man is: that is to say, personality, in the widest sense of the word; under which are included health, strength, beauty, temperament, moral character, intelligence and education.

(2) What a man has: that is, property and possessions of every kind.

(3) How a man stands in the estimation of others: by which is to be understood, as everybody knows, what a man is in the eyes of his fellowmen, or, more strictly, the light in which they regard him. This is shown by their opinion of him; and their opinion is in its turn manifested by the honor in which he is held, and by his rank and reputation.

The differences which come under the first head are those which Nature herself has set between man and man; and from this fact alone we may at once infer that they influence the happiness or unhappiness of mankind in a much more vital and radical way than those contained under the two following heads, which are merely the effect of human arrangements. Compared with genuine personal advantages, such as a great mind or a great heart, all the privileges of rank or birth, even of royal birth, are but as kings on the stage, to kings in real life. The same thing was said long ago by Metrodorus, the earliest disciple of Epicurus, who wrote as the title of one of his chapters, "The happiness we receive from ourselves is greater than that which we obtain from our surroundings." And it is an obvious fact, which cannot be called in question, that the principal element in a man's well-being—indeed, in the whole tenor of his existence,—is what he is made of, his inner constitution. For this is the immediate source of that inward satisfaction or dissatisfaction resulting from the sum total of his sensations, desires and thoughts; whilst his surroundings, on the other hand, exert only a mediate or indirect influence upon him. This is why the same external events or circumstances affect no two people alike; even with perfectly similar surroundings every one lives in a world of his own. For a man has immediate apprehension only of his own ideas, feelings and volitions; the outer world can influence him only insofar as it brings these to life. The world in which a man lives shapes itself chiefly by the way in which he looks at it, and so it proves different to different men; to one it is barren, dull, and superficial; to another rich, interesting, and full of meaning. On hearing of the interesting events which have happened in the course of a man's experience, many people will wish that similar things had happened in their lives too, completely forgetting that they should be envious rather of the mental aptitude which

lent those events the significance they possess when he describes them; to a man of genius they were interesting adventures; but to the dull perceptions of an ordinary individual they would have been stale, every-day occurrences. This is in the highest degree the case with many of Goethe's and Byron's poems, which are obviously founded upon actual facts; where it is open to a foolish reader to envy the poet because so many delightful things happened to him, instead of envying that mighty power of phantasy which was capable of turning a fairly common experience into something so great and beautiful.

In the same way, a person of melancholy temperament will make a scene in a tragedy out of what appears to the sanguine man only in the light of an interesting conflict, and to a phlegmatic soul as something without any meaning;—all of which rests upon the fact that every event, in order to be realized and appreciated, requires the co-operation of two factors, namely, a subject and an object, although these are as closely and necessarily connected as oxygen and hydrogen in water. When therefore the objective or external factor in an experience is actually the same, but the subjective or personal appreciation of it varies, the event is just as much a different one in the eyes of different persons as if the objective factors had not been alike; for to a blunt intelligence the fairest and best object in the world presents only a poor reality, and is therefore only poorly appreciated,—like a fine landscape in dull weather, or in the reflection of a bad camera obscura. In plain language, every man is pent up within the limits of his own consciousness, and cannot directly get beyond those limits any more than he can get beyond his own skin; so external aid is not of much use to him. On the stage, one man is a prince, another a minister, a third a servant or a soldier or a general, and so on,—mere external differences: the inner reality, the kernel of all these appearances is the same—a poor player, with all the anxieties of his lot. In life it is just the same. Differences of rank and wealth give every man his part to play, but this by no means implies a difference of inward happiness and pleasure; here, too, there is the same being in all—a poor mortal, with his hardships and troubles. Though these may, indeed, in every case proceed from dissimilar causes, they are in their essential nature much the same in all their forms, with degrees of in-

tensity which vary, no doubt, but in no wise correspond to the part a man has to play, to the presence or absence of position and wealth. Since everything which exists or happens for a man exists only in his consciousness and happens for it alone, the most essential thing for a man is the constitution of his consciousness, which is in most cases far more important than the circumstances which go to form its contents. All the pride and pleasure of the world, mirrored in the dull consciousness of a fool, are poor indeed compared with the imagination of Cervantes writing his *Don Quixote* in a miserable prison. The objective half of life and reality is in the hand of fate, and accordingly takes various forms in different cases: the subjective half is ourselves, and in essentials it always remains the same.

Hence the life of every man is stamped with the same character throughout, however much his external circumstances may alter; it is like a series of variations on a single theme. No one can get beyond his own individuality. An animal, under whatever circumstances it is placed, remains within the narrow limits to which Nature has irrevocably consigned it; so that our endeavors to make a pet happy must always keep within the compass of its nature, and be restricted to what it can feel. So it is with man; the measure of the happiness he can attain is determined beforehand by his individuality. More especially is this the case with the mental powers, which fix once for all his capacity for the higher kinds of pleasure. If these powers are small, no efforts from without, nothing that his fellowmen or that fortune can do for him, will suffice to raise him above the ordinary degree of human happiness and pleasure, half animal though it be; his only resources are his sensual appetite,—a cozy and cheerful family life at the most,—low company and vulgar pastime; even education, on the whole, can avail little, if anything, for the enlargement of his horizon. For the highest, most varied and lasting pleasures are those of the mind, however much our youth may deceive us on this point; and the pleasures of the mind turn chiefly on the powers of the mind. It is clear, then, that our happiness depends in a great degree upon what we are, upon our individuality, whilst lot or destiny is generally taken to mean only what we have, or our reputation. Our lot, in this sense, may improve; but we do not ask

much of it if we are inwardly rich: on the other hand, a fool remains a fool, a dull blockhead, to his last hour, even though he were surrounded by hours in paradise. This is why Goethe, in the *Westöstlicher Diwan*, says that every man, whether he occupies a low position in life, or emerges as its victor, testifies to personality as the greatest factor in happiness.

Everything confirms the fact that the subjective element in life is incomparably more important for our happiness and pleasure than the objective, from such sayings as "Hunger is the best sauce" and "Youth and Age cannot live together," up to the life of the Genius and the Saint. Health outweighs all other blessings so much that one may really say that a healthy beggar is happier than an ailing king. A quiet and cheerful temperament, happy in the enjoyment of a perfectly sound physique, and intellect clear, lively, penetrating, and seeing things as they are, a moderate and gentle will, and therefore a good conscience—these are privileges which no rank or wealth can make up for or replace. For what a man is in himself, what accompanies him when he is alone, what no one can give or take away, is obviously more essential to him than everything he has in the way of possessions, or even what he may be in the eyes of the world. An intellectual man in complete solitude has excellent entertainment in his own thoughts and fancies, while no amount of diversity or social pleasures, theatres, excursions and amusements, can ward off boredom from a dullard. A good, temperate, gentle character can be happy in needy circumstances, whilst a covetous, envious and malicious man, even if he be the richest in the world, goes miserable. Nay more; to one who had the constant delight of a special individuality, with a high degree of intellect, most of the pleasures which are run after by mankind are simply superfluous; they are even a trouble and a burden. And so Horace says of himself, that, however many are deprived of the fancy-goods of life, there is one at least who can live without them, and when Socrates saw various articles of luxury spread out for sale, he exclaimed: "How much there is in the world I do not want."

So the first and most essential element in our life's happiness is what we are,—our personality, if for no other reason than that it is a constant

factor coming into play under all circumstances, besides, unlike the blessings which are described under the other two heads, it is not the sport of destiny and cannot be wrested from us;—and, so far, it is endowed with an absolute value in contrast to the merely relative worth of the other two. The consequence of this is that it is much more difficult than people commonly suppose to get a hold on a man from without. But here the all-powerful agent, Time, comes in and claims its rights, and before its influence physical and mental advantages gradually waste away. Moral character alone remains inaccessible to it. In view of the destructive effect of time, it seems, indeed, as if the blessings named under the other two heads, of which time cannot directly rob us, were superior to those of the first. Another advantage might be claimed for them, namely, that being in their very nature objective and external, they are attainable, and every one is presented with the possibility, at least, of coming into possession of them; whilst what is subjective is not open to us to acquire, but making its entry by a kind of divine right, it remains for life, immutable, inalienable, and inexorable doom. . . . Goethe describes how an unalterable destiny is assigned to every man at the hour of his birth, so that he can develop only in the lines laid down for him, as it were, by the conjunctions of the stars; and how the Sybil and the prophets declare that himself a man can never escape, nor any power of time avail to change the path on which his life is cast.

The only thing that stands in our power to achieve, is to make the most advantageous use possible of the personal qualities we possess, and accordingly to follow such pursuits only as will call them into play, to strive after the kind of perfection of which they admit and to avoid every other; consequently, to choose the position, occupation and manner of life which are most suitable for their development.

Imagine a man endowed with herculean strength who is compelled by circumstances to follow a sedentary occupation, some minute exquisite work of the hands, for example, or to engage in study and mental labor demanding quite other powers, and just those which he has not got,—compelled, that is, to leave unused the powers in which he is pre-eminently strong; a man placed like this will never feel happy all his life through. Even more miserable will be the lot of the man with in-



tellectual powers of a very high order, who has to leave them undeveloped and unemployed, in the pursuit of a calling which does not require them, some bodily labor, perhaps, for which his strength is insufficient. Still, in a case of this kind, it should be our care, especially in youth, to avoid the precipice of presumption, and not ascribe to ourselves a superfluity of power which is not there.

Since the blessings described under the first head decidedly outweigh those contained under the other two, it is manifestly a wiser course to aim at the maintenance of our health and the cultivation of our faculties, than at the amassing of wealth; but this must not be mistaken as meaning that we should neglect to acquire an adequate supply of the necessities of life. Wealth, in the strict sense of the word, that is, great superfluity, can do little for our happiness; and many rich people feel unhappy just because they are without any true mental culture or knowledge, and consequently have no objective interests which would qualify them for intellectual occupations. For beyond the satisfaction of some real and natural necessities, all that the possession of wealth can achieve has a very small influence upon our happiness, in the proper sense of the word; indeed, wealth rather disturbs it, because the preservation of property entails a great many unavoidable anxieties. And still men are a thousand times more intent on becoming rich than on acquiring culture, though it is quite certain that what a man is contributes much more to his happiness than what he has. So you may see many a man, as industrious as an ant, ceaselessly occupied from morning to night in the endeavor to increase his heap of gold. Beyond the narrow horizon of means to this end, he knows nothing; his mind is a blank, and consequently unsusceptible to any other influence. The highest pleasures, those of the intellect, are to him inaccessible, and he tries in vain to replace them by the fleeting pleasures of sense in which he indulges, lasting but a brief hour and at tremendous cost. And if he is lucky, his struggles result in his having a really great pile of gold, which he leaves to his heir, either to make it still larger, or to squander it in extravagance. A life like this, though pursued with a sense of earnestness and an air of importance, is just as silly as many another which has a fool's cap for its symbol.

What a man has in himself is, then, the chief element in his happiness. Because this is, as a rule, so very little, most of those who are placed beyond the struggle with penury feel at bottom quite as unhappy as those who are still engaged in it. Their minds are vacant, their imagination dull, their spirits poor, and so they are driven to the company of those like them—for *similis simili gaudet*—where they make common pursuit of pastime and entertainment, consisting for the most part in sensual pleasure, amusement of every kind, and finally, in excess and libertinism. A young man of rich family enters upon life with a large patrimony, and often runs through it in an incredibly short space of time, in vicious extravagance; and why? Simply because, here too, the mind is empty and void, and so the man is bored with existence. He was sent forth into the world outwardly rich but inwardly poor, and his vain endeavor was to make his external wealth compensate for his inner poverty, by trying to obtain everything from without, like an old man who seeks to strengthen himself as King David or Maréchal de Retz tried to do. And so in the end one who is inwardly poor comes to be also poor outwardly.

I need not insist upon the importance of the other two kinds of blessings which make up the happiness of human life; now-a-days the value of possessing them is too well known to require advertisement. The third class, it is true, may seem, compared with the second, of a very ethereal character, as it consists only of other people's opinions. Still every one has to strive for reputation, that is to say, a good name. Rank, on the other hand, should be aspired to only by those who serve the state, and fame by very few indeed. In any case, reputation is looked upon as a priceless treasure, and fame as the most precious of all the blessings a man can attain,—the Golden Fleece, as it were, of the elect: whilst only fools will prefer rank to property. The second and third classes, moreover, are reciprocally cause and effect; so far, that is, as Petronius' maxim, *habes habebis*, is true; and conversely, the favor of others, in all its forms, often puts us in the way of getting what we want.

We have already seen, in general, that what a man is contributes much more to his happiness than what he has, or how he is regarded by others. What a man is, and so what he has in his own person, is always the chief thing to consider; for his individuality accompanies him always

and everywhere, and gives its color to all his experiences. In every kind of enjoyment, for instance, the pleasure depends principally upon the man himself. Every one admits this in regard to physical, and how much truer it is of intellectual, pleasure. When we use that English expression, "to enjoy one's self," we are employing a very striking and appropriate phrase; for observe—one says, not "he enjoys Paris," but "he enjoys himself in Paris." To a man possessed of an ill-conditioned individuality, all pleasure is like delicate wine in a mouth made bitter with gall. Therefore, in the blessings as well as in the ills of life, less depends upon what befalls us than upon the way in which it is met, that is, upon the kind and degree of our general susceptibility. What a man is and has in himself—in a word personality, with all it entails, is the only immediate and direct factor in his happiness and welfare. All else is mediate and indirect, and its influence can be neutralized and frustrated; but the influence of personality never. This is why the envy which personal qualities excite is the most implacable of all, as it is also the most carefully dissembled.

Further, the constitution of our consciousness is the ever-present and lasting element in all we do or suffer; our individuality is persistently at work, more or less, at every moment of our life: all other influences are temporal, incidental, fleeting, and subject to every kind of chance and change. This is why Aristotle says: "It is not wealth but character that lasts." And just for the same reason we can more easily bear a misfortune which comes to us entirely from without, than one which we have drawn upon ourselves; for fortune may always change, but not character. Therefore, subjective blessings,—a noble nature, a capable head, a joyful temperament, bright spirits, a well-constituted, perfectly sound physique, in a word, *mens sana in corpore sano*, are the first and most important elements in happiness; so that we should be more intent on promoting and preserving such qualities than on the possession of external wealth and external honor.

And of all these, the one which makes us the most directly happy is a genial flow of good spirits; for this excellent quality is its own immediate reward. The man who is cheerful and merry has always a good reason for being so,—the fact, namely, that he is so. There is nothing

which, like this quality, can so completely replace the loss of every other blessing. If you know anyone who is young, handsome, rich and esteemed, and you want to know, further, if he is happy, ask, Is he cheerful and genial?—and if he is, what does it matter whether he is young or old, straight or humpbacked, poor or rich?—he is happy. In my early days I once opened an old book and found these words: “If you laugh a great deal, you are happy; if you cry a great deal, you are unhappy”; a very simple remark, no doubt; but just because it is so simple I have never been able to forget it, even though it is in the last degree a truism. So if cheerfulness knocks at our door, we should throw it wide open, for it never comes inopportunately; instead of that, we often make scruples about letting it in. We want to be quite sure that we have every reason to be contented; then we are afraid that cheerfulness of spirits may interfere with serious reflections or weighty cares. Cheerfulness is a direct and immediate gain,—the very coin, as it were, of happiness, and not, like all else, merely a cheque upon the bank; for it alone makes us immediately happy in the present moment, and that is the highest blessing for beings like us, whose existence is but an infinitesimal moment between two eternities. To secure and promote this feeling of cheerfulness should be the supreme aim of all our endeavors after happiness.

Now it is certain that nothing contributes so little to cheerfulness as riches, or so much, as health. Is it not in the lower classes, the so-called working classes, more especially those of them who live in the country, that we see cheerful and contented faces? and is it not amongst the rich, the upper classes, that we find faces full of ill-humor and vexation? Consequently we should try as much as possible to maintain a high degree of health; for cheerfulness is the very flower of it. I need hardly say what one must do to be healthy—avoid every kind of excess, all violent and unpleasant emotion, all mental overstrain, take daily exercise in the open air, cold baths and such like hygienic measures. For without a proper amount of daily exercise no one can remain healthy; all the processes of life demand exercise for the due performance of their functions, exercise not only of the parts more immediately concerned, but also of the whole body. For, as Aristotle rightly says, “Life is movement;

it is its very essence." Ceaseless and rapid motion goes on in every part of the organism. The heart, with its complicated double systole and diastole, beats strongly and untiringly; with twenty-eight beats it has to drive the whole of the blood through arteries, veins and capillaries; the lungs pump like a steam-engine, without intermission; the intestines are always in peristaltic action; the glands are all constantly absorbing and secreting; even the brain has a double motion of its own, with every beat of the pulse and every breath we draw. When people can get no exercise at all, as is the case with the countless numbers who are condemned to a sedentary life, there is a glaring and fatal disproportion between outward inactivity and inner tumult. For this ceaseless internal motion requires some external counterpart, and the want of it produces effects like those of emotion which we are obliged to suppress. Even trees must be shaken by the wind, if they are to thrive. The rule which finds its application here may be most briefly expressed in Latin: *omnis motus, quo celerior, eo magis motus.*

How much our happiness depends upon our spirits, and these again upon our state of health, may be seen by comparing the influence which the same external circumstances or events have upon us when we are well and strong with the effects which they have when we are depressed and troubled with ill-health. It is not what things are objectively and in themselves, but what they are for us, in our way of looking at them, that makes us happy or the reverse. As Epictetus says, "Men are not influenced by things, but by their thoughts about things." And, in general, nine-tenths of our happiness depends upon health alone. With health, everything is a source of pleasure; without it, nothing else, whatever it may be, is enjoyable; even the other personal blessings,—a great mind, a happy temperament—are degraded and dwarfed for want of it. So it is really with good reason that, when two people meet, the first thing they do is to inquire after each other's health, and to express the hope that it is good; for good health is by far the most important element in human happiness. It follows from all this that the greatest of follies is to sacrifice health for any other kind of happiness, whatever it may be, for gain, advancement, learning or fame, let alone, then, for

fleeting sensual pleasures. Everything else should rather be postponed to it.

But however much health may contribute to that flow of good spirits which is so essential to our happiness, good spirits do not entirely depend upon health; for a man may be perfectly sound in his physique and still possess a melancholy temperament and be generally given up to sad thoughts. The ultimate cause of this is undoubtedly to be found in innate, and therefore unalterable, physical constitution, especially in the more or less normal relation of a man's sensitiveness to his muscular and vital energy. Abnormal sensitiveness produces inequality of spirits, a predominating melancholy, with periodical fits of unrestrained liveliness. A genius is one whose nervous power or sensitiveness is largely in excess; as Aristotle has very correctly observed, "Men distinguished in philosophy, politics, poetry or art appear to be all of a melancholy temperament." This is doubtless the passage which Cicero has in mind when he says, as he often does, *Aristoteles ait omnes ingeniosos melancholicos esse*. Shakespeare has very neatly expressed this radical and innate diversity of temperament in those lines in *The Merchant of Venice*:

Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes  
And laugh like parrots at a bagpiper:  
And others of such vinegar aspect,  
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

This is the difference which Plato draws between the man of easy, and the man of difficult disposition—in proof of which he refers to the varying degrees of susceptibility which different people show to pleasurable and painful impressions; so that one man will laugh at what makes another despair. As a rule, the stronger the susceptibility to unpleasant impressions, the weaker is the susceptibility to pleasant ones, and vice versa. If it is equally possible for an event to turn out well or ill, the *δύσκολος* will be annoyed or grieved if the issue is unfavorable, and will not rejoice, should it be happy. On the other hand, the *εύκολος* will neither worry nor fret over an unfavorable issue, but rejoice if it turns

out well. If the one is successful in nine out of ten undertakings, he will not be pleased, but rather annoyed that one has miscarried; whilst the other, if only a single one succeeds, will manage to find consolation in the fact and remain cheerful. But here is another instance of the truth, that hardly any evil is entirely without its compensation; for the misfortunes and sufferings which the *υσκόλοι*, that is, people of gloomy and anxious character, have to overcome, are, on the whole, more imaginary and therefore less real than those which befall the gay and careless; for a man who paints everything black, who constantly fears the worst and takes measures accordingly, will not be disappointed so often in this world, as one who always looks upon the bright side of things. And when a morbid affection of the nerves, or a derangement of the digestive organs, plays into the hands of an innate tendency to gloom, this tendency may reach such a height that permanent discomfort produces a weariness of life. So arises an inclination to suicide, which even the most trivial unpleasantness may actually bring about; nay, when the tendency attains its worst form, it may be occasioned by nothing in particular, but a man may resolve to put an end to his existence, simply because he is permanently unhappy, and then coolly and firmly carry out his determination; as may be seen by the way in which the sufferer, when placed under supervision, as he usually is, eagerly waits to seize the first unguarded moment, when, without a shudder, without a struggle or recoil, he may use the now natural and welcome means of effecting his release. Even the healthiest, perhaps even the most cheerful man, may resolve upon death under certain circumstances; when, for instance, his sufferings, or his fears of some inevitable misfortune, reach such a pitch as to outweigh the terrors of death. The only difference lies in the degree of suffering necessary to bring about the fatal act, a degree which will be high in the case of a cheerful, and low in that of a gloomy man. The greater the melancholy, the lower need the degree be; in the end, it may even sink to zero. But if a man is cheerful, and his spirits are supported by good health, it requires a high degree of suffering to make him lay hands upon himself. There are countless steps in the scale between the two extremes of suicide, the suicide which springs merely from a morbid intensification of innate gloom, and the suicide

of the healthy and cheerful man, who has entirely objective grounds for putting an end to his existence.

Beauty is partly an affair of health. It may be reckoned as a personal advantage; though it does not, properly speaking, contribute directly to our happiness. It does so indirectly, by impressing other people; and it is no unimportant advantage, even in man. Beauty is an open letter of recommendation, predisposing the heart to favor the person who presents it.

The most general survey shows us that the two foes of human happiness are pain and boredom. We may go further, and say that in the degree in which we are fortunate enough to get away from the one, we approach the other. Life presents, in fact, a more or less violent oscillation between the two. The reason of this is that each of these two poles stands in a double antagonism to the other, external or objective, and inner or subjective. Needy surroundings and poverty produce pain; while, if a man is more than well off, he is bored. Accordingly, while the lower classes are engaged in a ceaseless struggle with need, in other words, with pain, the upper carry on a constant and often desperate battle with boredom. The inner or subjective antagonism arises from the fact that, in the individual, susceptibility to pain varies inversely with susceptibility to boredom, because susceptibility is directly proportionate to mental power. Let me explain. A dull mind is, as a rule, associated with dull sensibilities, nerves which no stimulus can affect, a temperament, in short, which does not feel pain or anxiety very much, however great or terrible it may be. Now, intellectual dullness is at the bottom of that vacuity of soul which is stamped on so many faces, a state of mind which betrays itself by a constant and lively attention to all the trivial circumstances in the external world. This is the true source of boredom—a continual panting after excitement, in order to have a pretext for giving the mind and spirits something to occupy them. The kind of things people choose for this purpose shows that they are not very particular, as witness the miserable pastimes they have recourse to, and their ideas of social pleasure and conversation; or again, the number of people who gossip on the doorstep or gape out of the window. It is mainly because of this inner vacuity of soul that people go in quest of



society, diversion, amusement, luxury of every sort, which lead many to extravagance and misery. Nothing is so good a protection against such misery as inward wealth, the wealth of the mind, because the greater it grows, the less room it leaves for boredom. The inexhaustible activity of thought! finding ever new material to work upon in the multifarious phenomena of self and nature, and able and ready to form new combinations of them,—there you have something that invigorates the mind, and apart from moments of relaxation, sets it far above the reach of boredom.

But, on the other hand, this high degree of intelligence is rooted in a high degree of susceptibility, greater strength of will, greater passionateness; and from the union of these qualities comes an increased capacity for emotion, an enhanced sensibility to all mental and even bodily pain, greater impatience of obstacles, greater resentment of interruption;—all of which tendencies are augmented by the power of the imagination, the vivid character of the whole range of thought, including what is disagreeable. This applies, in various degrees, to every step in the long scale of mental power, from the veriest dunce to the greatest genius that ever lived. Therefore the nearer anyone is, either from a subjective or from an objective point of view, to one of those sources of suffering in human life, the farther he is from the other. And so a man's natural bent will lead him to make his objective world conform to his subjective as much as possible; that is to say, he will take the greatest measures against that form of suffering to which he is most liable. The wise man will, above all, strive after freedom from pain and annoyance, quiet and leisure, consequently a tranquil, modest life, with as few encounters as may be; and so, after a little experience of his so-called fellowmen, he will elect to live in retirement, or even, if he is a man of great intellect, in solitude. For the more a man has in himself, the less he will want from other people,—the less, indeed, other people can be to him. This is why a high degree of intellect tends to make a man unsocial. True, if quality of intellect could be made up for by quantity, it might be worth while to live even in the great world; but unfortunately, a hundred fools together will not make one wise man.

But the individual who stands at the other end of the scale is no sooner

free from the pangs of need than he endeavors to get pastime and society at any cost, taking up with the first person he meets, and avoiding nothing so much as himself. For in solitude, where everyone is thrown upon his own resources, what a man has in himself comes to light; the fool in fine raiment groans under the burden of his miserable personality a burden which he can never throw off, whilst the man of talent peoples the waste places with his animating thoughts. Seneca declares that folly is its own burden,—a very true saying, with which may be compared the words of Jesus, the son of Sirach, "The life of a fool is worse than death." And, as a rule, it will be found that a man is sociable just in the degree in which he is intellectually poor and generally vulgar. For one's choice in this world does not go much beyond solitude on one side and vulgarity on the other.

The brain may be regarded as a kind of parasite of the organism, a pensioner, as it were, who dwells with the body; and leisure, that is, the time one has for the free enjoyment of one's consciousness or individuality, is the fruit or produce of the rest of existence, which is in general only labor and effort. But what does most people's leisure yield?—boredom and dullness; except, of course, when it is occupied with sensual pleasure or folly. How little such leisure is worth may be seen in the way in which it is spent: and, as Ariosto observes, how miserable are the idle hours of ignorant men! Ordinary people think merely how they shall spend their time; a man of any talent tries to use it. The reason why people of limited intellect are apt to be bored is that their intellect is absolutely nothing more than the means by which the motive power of the will is put into force: and whenever there is nothing particular to set the will in motion, it rests, and their intellect takes a holiday, because, equally with the will, it requires something external to bring it into play. The result is an awful stagnation of whatever power a man has—in a word, boredom. To counteract this miserable feeling, men run to trivialities which please for the moment they are taken up, hoping thus to engage the will in order to rouse it to action, and so set the intellect in motion; for it is the latter which has to give effect to these motives of the will. Compared with real and natural motives, these are but as paper money to coin; for their value is only arbitrary—card

games and the like, which have been invented for this very purpose. And if there is nothing else to be done, a man will twirl his thumbs or beat the devil's tattoo; or a cigar may be a welcome substitute for exercising his brains. Because people have no thoughts to deal in, they deal cards, and try to win one another's money. Idiots! But I do not wish to be unjust; so let me remark that it may certainly be said in defence of card-playing that it is a preparation for the world and for business life, because one learns thereby how to make a clever use of fortuitous but unalterable circumstances (cards, in this case), and to get as much out of them as one can: and to do this a man must learn a little dissimulation, and how to put a good face upon a bad business. But, on the other hand, it is exactly for this reason that card-playing is so demoralizing, since the whole object of it is to employ every kind of trick and machination in order to win what belongs to another. And a habit of this sort, learnt at the card-table, strikes root and pushes its way into practical life; and in the affairs of every day a man gradually comes to regard *meum* and *tuum* in much the same light as cards, and to consider that he may use to the utmost whatever advantages he possesses, as long as he does not come within the arm of the law. Examples of what I mean are of daily occurrence in mercantile life. Since, then, leisure is the flower, or rather the fruit, of existence, as it puts a man into possession of himself, those are happy indeed who possess something real in themselves. But what do you get from most people's leisure?—only a good-for-nothing fellow, who is terribly bored and a burden to himself. Let us, therefore, rejoice, dear brethren, for we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Further, as no land is so well off as that which requires few imports, or none at all, so the happiest man is one who has enough in his own inner wealth, and requires little or nothing from outside for his maintenance, for imports are expensive things, reveal dependence, entail danger, occasion trouble, and when all is said and done, are a poor substitute for home produce. No man ought to expect much from others, or, in general, from the external world. What one human being can be to another is not a very great deal: in the end every one stands alone, and the important thing is who it is that stands alone. Here, then, is another

application of the general truth which Goethe recognizes in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Bk. III), that in everything a man has ultimately to appeal to himself; or, as Goldsmith puts it in *The Traveller*:

Still to ourselves in every place consign'd  
Our own felicity we make or find.

Himself is the source of the best and most a man can be or achieve. The more this is so—the more a man finds his sources of pleasure in himself—the happier he will be. Therefore, it is with great truth that Aristotle says, “To be happy means to be self-sufficient.” For all other sources of happiness are in their nature most uncertain, precarious, fleeting, the sport of chance; and so even under the most favorable circumstances they can easily be exhausted; nay, this is unavoidable, because they are not always within reach. And in old age these sources of happiness must necessarily dry up:—love leaves us then, and wit, desire to travel, delight in horses, aptitude for social intercourse; friends and relations, too, are taken from us by death. Then more than ever, it depends upon what a man has in himself; for this will stick to him longest; and at any period of life it is the only genuine and lasting source of happiness. There is not much to be got anywhere in the world. It is filled with misery and pain; and if a man escapes these, boredom lies in wait for him at every corner. Nay more: it is evil which generally has the upper hand, and folly makes the most noise. Fate is cruel, and mankind is pitiable. In such a world as this, a man who is rich in himself is like a bright, warm, happy room at Christmastide, while without are the frost and snow of a December night. Therefore, without doubt, the happiest destiny on earth is to have the rare gift of a rich individuality, and, more especially to be possessed of a good endowment of intellect; this is the happiest destiny, though it may not be, after all, a very brilliant one.

There was a great wisdom in that remark which Queen Christina of Sweden made, in her nineteenth year, about Descartes, who had then lived for twenty years in the deepest solitude in Holland, and, apart from report, was known to her only by a single essay: “M. Descartes,” she said, “is the happiest of men, and his condition seems to me much to

be envied." Of course, as was the case with Descartes, external circumstances must be favorable enough to allow a man to be master of his life and happiness; or, as we read in Ecclesiastes, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance, and by it there is profit to them that see the sun." The man to whom Nature and fate have granted the blessing of wisdom, will be most anxious and careful to keep open the fountains of happiness which he has in himself; and for this, independence and leisure are necessary. To obtain them, he will be willing to moderate his desires and harbor his resources, all the more because he is not, like others, restricted to the external world for his pleasures. So he will not be misled by expectations of office, or money, or the favor and applause of his fellowmen, into surrendering himself in order to conform to low desires and vulgar tastes. It is a great piece of folly to sacrifice the inner for the outer man, to give the whole or the greater part of one's quiet, leisure and independence for splendor, rank, pomp, titles and honor. This is what Goethe did. My good luck drew me quite in the other direction.

The truth which I am insisting upon here, the truth, namely, that the chief source of human happiness is eternal, is confirmed by that most accurate observation of Aristotle in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, that every pleasure presupposes some sort of activity, the application of some sort of power, without which it cannot exist. The doctrine of Aristotle's, that a man's happiness consists in the free exercise of his highest faculties, is also enunciated by Stobaeus in his exposition of the Peripatetic philosophy: "happiness," he says, "means vigorous and successful activity in all your undertakings"; and he explains that by vigor ἀρετή he means mastery in any thing, whatever it be. Now, the original purpose of those forces with which nature has endowed man is to enable him to struggle against the difficulties which beset him on all sides. But if this struggle comes to an end, his unemployed forces become a burden to him; and he has to set to work and play with them,—to use them, I mean, for no purpose at all, beyond avoiding the other source of human suffering, boredom, to which he is at once exposed. It is the upper classes, people of wealth, who are the greatest victims of boredom. Lucretius long ago described their miserable state, and the truth of his description may be still recognized today, in the life of every great capital—where the rich man is

seldom in his own halls, because it bores him to be there, and still he returns thither, because he is no better off outside;—or else he is away post-haste to his house in the country, as if it were on fire; and he is no sooner arrived there, than he is bored again, and seeks to forget everything in sleep, or else hurries back to town once more. In their youth, such people must have had a superfluity of muscular and vital energy,—powers which, unlike those of the mind, cannot maintain their full degree of vigor very long; and in later years they either have no mental powers at all, or cannot develop any for want of employment which would bring them into play; so that they are in a wretched plight. Will, however, they still possess, for this is the only power that is inexhaustible; and they try to stimulate their will by passionate excitement, such as games of chance for high stakes—undoubtedly a most degrading form of vice. And one may say generally that if a man finds himself with nothing to do, he is sure to choose some amusement suited to the kind of power in which he excels,—bowls, it may be, or chess; hunting or painting; horse-racing or music, cards, or poetry, heraldry, philosophy, or some other dilettante interest. We might classify these interests methodically, by reducing them to expressions of the three fundamental powers, the factors, that is to say, which go to make up the physiological constitution of man; and further, by considering these powers by themselves, and apart from any of the definite aims which they subserve, and simply as affording three sources of possible pleasure, out of which every man will choose what suits him, according as he excels in one direction or another.

First of all come the pleasures of vital energy, of food, drink, digestion, rest and sleep; and there are parts of the world where it can be said that these are characteristic and national pleasures. Secondly, there are the pleasures of muscular energy, such as walking, running, wrestling, dancing, fencing, riding and similar athletic pursuits, which sometimes take the form of sport, and sometimes of a military life and real warfare. Thirdly, there are the pleasures of sensibility, such as observation, thought, feeling, or a taste for poetry or culture, music, learning, reading, meditation, invention, philosophy and the like. As regards the value, relative worth and duration of each of these kinds of pleasure, a great

deal might be said, which, however, I leave the reader to supply. But every one will see that the nobler the power which is brought into play, the greater will be the pleasure which it gives; for pleasure always involves the use of one's own powers, and happiness consists in a frequent repetition of pleasure. No one will deny that in this respect the pleasures of sensibility occupy a higher place than either of the other two fundamental kinds; which exist in an equal, nay, in a greater degree in brutes; it is this preponderating amount of sensibility which distinguishes man from other animals. Now, our mental powers are forms of sensibility, and therefore a preponderating amount of it makes us capable of that kind of pleasure which has to do with mind, so-called intellectual pleasure; and the more sensibility predominates, the greater the pleasure will be.

The normal, ordinary man takes a vivid interest in anything only in so far as it excites his will, that is to say, is a matter of personal interest to him. But constant excitement of the will is never an unmixed good, to say the least; in other words, it involves pain. Card-playing . . . is a device for providing this kind of excitement, and that, too, by means of interests so small as to produce slight and momentary, instead of real and permanent, pain. Card-playing is, in fact, a mere tickling of the will.

On the other hand, a man of powerful intellect is capable of taking a vivid interest in things in the way of mere knowledge, with no admixture of will; nay, such an interest is a necessity to him. It places him in a sphere where pain is an alien,—a diviner air, where the gods live serene.

Look on these two pictures—the life of the masses, one long, dull record of struggle and effort entirely devoted to the petty interests of personal welfare, to misery in all its forms, a life beset by intolerable boredom as soon as ever those aims are satisfied and the man is thrown back upon himself, whence he can be roused again to some sort of movement only by the wild fire of passion. On the other side you have a man endowed with a high degree of mental power, leading an existence rich in thought and full of life and meaning, occupied by worthy and interesting objects as soon as ever he is free to give himself to them, bearing in himself a source of the noblest pleasure. What external

promptings he wants come from the works of nature, and from the contemplation of human affairs and the achievements of the great of all ages and countries, which are thoroughly appreciated by a man of this type alone, as being the only one who can quite understand and feel with them. And so it is for him alone that those great ones have really lived; it is to him that they make their appeal; the rest are but casual hearers who only half understand either them or their followers. Of course, this characteristic of the intellectual man implies that he has one more need than the others, the need of observing, studying, meditating, practising, the need, in short, of undisturbed leisure. For, as Voltaire has very rightly said, "there are no real pleasures without real needs"; and the need of them is why to such a man pleasures are accessible which are denied to others,—the varied beauties of nature and art and literature. To heap these pleasures round people who do not want them and cannot appreciate them, is like expecting gray hairs to fall in love. A man who is privileged in this respect leads two lives, a personal and an intellectual life; and the latter gradually comes to be looked upon as the true one, and the former as merely a means to it. Other people make this shallow, empty and troubled existence an end in itself. To the life of the intellect such a man will give the preference over all his other occupations: by the constant growth of insight and knowledge, this intellectual life, like a slowly forming work of art, will acquire a consistency, a permanent intensity, a unity which becomes ever more and more complete; compared with which, a life devoted to the attainment of personal comfort, a life that may broaden indeed, but can never be deepened, makes but a poor show: and yet, as I have said, people make this baser sort of existence an end in itself.

The ordinary life of every day, so far as it is not moved by passion, is tedious and insipid; and if it is so moved, it soon becomes painful. Those alone are happy whom nature has favored with some superfluity of intellect, something beyond what is just necessary to carry out the behests of their will; for it enables them to lead an intellectual life as well, a life unattended by pain and full of vivid interests. Mere leisure, that is to say, intellect unoccupied in the service of the will, is not of itself sufficient: there must be a real superfluity of power, set free from the serv-



ice of the will and devoted to that of the intellect; for, as Seneca says, "illiterate leisure is a form of death, a living tomb." Varying with the amount of the superfluity, there will be countless developments in this second life, the life of the mind; it may be the mere collection and labeling of insects, birds, minerals, coins, or the highest achievements of poetry and philosophy. The life of the mind is not only a protection against boredom; it also wards off the pernicious effects of boredom; it keeps us from bad company, from the many dangers, misfortunes, losses and extravagances which the man who places his happiness entirely in the objective world is sure to encounter. My philosophy, for instance, has never brought me in a six-pence; but it has spared me many an expense.

The ordinary man places his life's happiness in things external to him, in property, rank, wife and children, friends, society, and the like, so that when he loses them or finds them disappointing, the foundation of his happiness is destroyed. In other words, his centre of gravity is not in himself; it is constantly changing its place, with every wish and whim. If he is a man of means, one day it will be his house in the country, another buying horses, or entertaining friends, or traveling,—a life, in short, of general luxury, the reason being that he seeks his pleasure in things outside him. Like one whose health and strength are gone, he tries to regain by the use of jellies and drugs, instead of by developing his own vital power, the true source of what he has lost. Before proceeding to the opposite, let us compare with this common type the man who comes midway between the two, endowed, it may be, not exactly with distinguished powers of mind, but with somewhat more than the ordinary amount of intellect. He will take a dilettante interest in art, or devote his attention to some branch of science—botany, for example, or physics, astronomy, history, and find a great deal of pleasure in such studies, and amuse himself with them when external forces or happiness are exhausted or fail to satisfy him any more. Of a man like this it may be said that his centre of gravity is partly in himself. But a dilettante interest in art is a very different thing from creative activity; and an amateur pursuit of science is apt to be superficial and not to penetrate to the heart of the matter. A man cannot entirely identify himself with

such pursuits, or have his whole existence so completely filled and permeated with them that he loses all interest in everything else. It is only the highest intellectual power, what we call genius, that attains to this degree of intensity, making all time and existence its theme, and striving to express its peculiar conception of the world, whether it contemplates life as the subject of poetry or of philosophy. Hence, undisturbed occupation with himself, his own thoughts and works, is a matter of urgent necessity to such a man; solitude is welcome, leisure is the highest good, and everything else is unnecessary, nay, even burdensome.

This is the only type of man of whom it can be said that his centre of gravity is entirely in himself; which explains why it is that people of this sort—and they are very rare—no matter how excellent their character may be, do not show that warm and unlimited interest in friends, family, and the community in general, of which others are so often capable; for if they have only themselves they are not inconsolable for the loss of everything else. This gives an isolation to their character, which is all the more effective since other people never really quite satisfy them, as being, on the whole, of a different nature: nay more, since this difference is constantly forcing itself upon their notice they get accustomed to move about amongst mankind as alien beings, and in thinking of humanity in general, to say they instead of we.

So the conclusion we come to is that the man whom nature has endowed with intellectual wealth is the happiest; so true it is that the subjective concerns us more than the objective; for whatever the latter may be, it can work only indirectly, secondly, and through the medium of the former—"the wealth of the soul is the only true wealth, for with all other riches comes a bane even greater than they." The man of inner wealth wants nothing from outside but the negative gift of undisturbed leisure, to develop and mature his intellectual faculties, that is, to enjoy his wealth; in short, he wants permission to be himself, his whole life long, every day and every hour. If he is destined to impress the character of his mind upon a whole race, he has only one measure of happiness or unhappiness—to succeed or fail in perfecting his powers and completing his work. All else is of small consequence. Accordingly,

the greatest minds of all ages have set the highest value upon undisturbed leisure, as worth exactly as much as the man himself. "Happiness appears to consist in leisure," says Aristotle, and Diogenes Laërtius reports that "Socrates praised leisure as the fairest of all possessions." So, in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle concludes that a life devoted to philosophy is the happiest; or, as he says in the *Politics*, "the free exercise of any power, whatever it may be, is happiness." This again, tallies with what Goethe says in *Wilhelm Meister*: "The man who is born with a talent which he is meant to use, finds his greatest happiness in using it."

But to be in possession of undisturbed leisure, is far from being the common lot; nay it is something alien to human nature, for the ordinary man's destiny is to spend life in procuring what is necessary for the subsistence of himself and his family; he is a son of struggle and need, not a free intelligence. So people as a rule soon get tired of undisturbed leisure, and it becomes burdensome if there are no fictitious and forced aims to occupy it, play, pastime and hobbies of every kind. For this very reason it is full of possible danger, and *difficilis in otio quies* is a true saying,—"it is difficult to keep quiet if you have nothing to do." On the other hand, a measure of intellect far surpassing the ordinary, is as unnatural as it is abnormal. But if it exists, and the man endowed with it is to be happy, he will want precisely that undisturbed leisure which the others find burdensome or pernicious; for without it he is a Pegasus in harness, and consequently unhappy. If these two unnatural circumstances, external, and internal, undisturbed leisure and great intellect, happen to coincide in the same person, it is a great piece of fortune; and if the fate is so far favorable, a man can lead the higher life, the life protected from the two opposite sources of human suffering, pain and boredom, from the painful struggle for existence, and the incapacity for enduring leisure (which is free existence itself)—evils which may be escaped only by being mutually neutralized.

But there is something to be said in opposition to this view. Great intellectual gifts mean an activity pre-eminently nervous in its character, and consequently a very high degree of susceptibility to pain in every form. Further, such gifts imply an intense temperament, larger and more vivid ideas, which, as the inseparable accompaniment of great in-

tellectual power, entail on its possessor a corresponding intensity of the emotions, making them incomparably more violent than those to which the ordinary man is a prey. Now, there are more things in the world productive of pain than of pleasure. Again, a large endowment of intellect tends to estrange the man who has it from other people and their doings; for the more a man has in himself, the less he will be able to find in them; and the hundred things in which they take delight, he will think shallow and insipid. Here, then, perhaps, is another instance of that law of compensation which makes itself felt everywhere. How often one hears it said, and said, too, with some plausibility, that the narrow-minded man is at bottom the happiest, even though his fortune is unenviable. I shall make no attempt to forestall the reader's own judgment on this point; more especially as Sophocles himself has given utterance to two diametrically opposite opinions; he says in one place—wisdom is the greatest part of happiness; and again, in another passage, he declares that the life of the thoughtless is the most pleasant of all. The philosophers of the Old Testament find themselves in a like contradiction.

The life of a fool is worse than death  
and—

. . . In much wisdom is much grief:  
and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

I may remark, however, that a man who has no mental needs, because his intellect is of the narrow and normal amount, is, in the strict sense of the word, what is called a philistine—an expression at first peculiar to the German language, a kind of slang term at the Universities, afterwards used, by analogy, in a higher sense, though still in its original meaning, as denoting one who is not a Son of the Muses. I should prefer to take a higher point of view, and apply the term philistine to people who are always seriously occupied with realities which are no realities; but as such a definition would be a transcendental one, and therefore not generally intelligible, it would hardly be in place in the present treatise, which aims at being popular. The other definition can be more easily elucidated, indicating, as it does, satisfactorily enough, the es-

sential nature of all those qualities which distinguish the philistine. He is defined to be a man without mental needs. From this it follows, firstly, in relation to himself, that he has no intellectual pleasures; for, as was remarked before, there are no real pleasures without real needs. The philistine's life is animated by no desire to gain knowledge and insight for their own sake, or to experience that true aesthetic pleasure which is so nearly akin to them. If pleasures of this kind are fashionable, and the philistine finds himself compelled to pay attention to them, he will force himself to do so, but he will take as little interest in them as possible. His only real pleasures are of a sensual kind, and he thinks that these indemnify him for the loss of the others. To him oysters and champagne are the height of existence; the aim of his life is to procure what will contribute to his bodily welfare, and he is indeed in a happy way if this causes him some trouble. If the luxuries of life are heaped upon him, he will inevitably be bored, and against boredom he has a great many fancied remedies, balls, theatres, parties, cards, gambling, horses, women, drinking, traveling and so on; all of which cannot protect a man from being bored, for where there are no intellectual needs, no intellectual pleasures are possible. The peculiar characteristic of the philistine is a dull, dry kind of gravity, akin to that of animals. Nothing really pleases, or excites, or interests him, for sensual pleasure is quickly exhausted, and the society of philistines soon becomes burdensome, and one may even get tired of playing cards. True, the pleasures of vanity are left, pleasures which he enjoys in his own way, either by feeling himself superior in point of wealth, or rank, or influence and power to other people, who thereupon pay him honor; or, at any rate, by going about with those who have a superfluity of these blessings, sunning himself in the reflection of their splendor—what the English call a snob.

From the essential nature of the philistine it follows, secondly, in regard to others, that, as he possesses no intellectual, but only physical need, he will seek the society of those who can satisfy the latter, but not the former. The last thing he will expect from his friends is the possession of any sort of intellectual capacity; nay, if he chances to meet with it, it will rouse his antipathy and even hatred; simply because in addition to an unpleasant sense of inferiority, he experiences in his heart, a dull

kind of envy, which has to be carefully concealed even from himself. Nevertheless, it sometimes grows into a secret feeling of rancor. But for all that, it will never occur to him to make his own ideas of worth or value to conform to the standard of such qualities; he will continue to give the preference to rank and riches, power and influence, which in his eyes seem to be the only genuine advantages in the world; and his wish will be to excel in them himself. All this is the consequence of his being a man without intellectual needs. The great affliction of all philistines is that they have no interest in ideas, and that, to escape being bored, they are in constant need of realities. But realities are either unsatisfactory or dangerous; when they lose their interest, they become fatiguing. But the ideal world is illimitable and calm,

something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow.

### BOËTHIUS, 475-525

Roman philosopher and statesman. He was thrust into prison as a result of false charges of treason and there he wrote his greatest work, *The Consolation of Philosophy*.

THE TROUBLE OF the many and various aims of mortal men brings them much care, and herein they go forward by different paths but strive to reach one end, which is happiness. And what good is that, to which if any man attain, he can desire nothing further. It is that highest of all good things, and it embraces in itself all good things: if any good is lacking, it cannot be the highest good, since then there is left outside it something which can be desired. Wherefore happiness is a state which is made perfect by the union of all good things. This end all men seek to reach, as I said, though by different paths. For there is implanted by nature in the minds of men a desire for the true good; but error leads them astray towards false goods by wrong paths.

Some men believe that the highest good is lacking nothing, and so they are at pains to possess abundant riches. Others consider the true good to be that which is most worthy of admiration and so they strive to attain to places of honor, and to be held by their fellow-citizens in honor thereby. Some determine the highest good lies in the highest power; and so they either desire to reign themselves, or try to cleave to those who do reign. Others think that renown is the greatest good, and they therefore hasten to make a famous name by the arts of peace or of war. But more than all measure the fruit of good by pleasure and enjoyment, and these think that the happiest man is abandoned to pleasure.

Further, there are those who confuse the aims and the causes of these good things: as those who desire riches for the sake of power or of pleasure, or those who seek power for the sake of money or celebrity. In these, then, and other things like to them, lies the aim of men's actions and prayers, such as renown and popularity, which seem to afford some fame, or wife and children, which are sought for the pleasure they give. On the other hand, the good of friends, which is the most honorable and holy of all, lies not in Fortune's but in Virtue's realm. All others are adopted for the sake of power or enjoyment.

Again, it is plain that the good things of the body must be accounted to those false causes which we have mentioned; for bodily strength and stature seem to make men more able and strong; beauty and swiftness seem to give renown; health seems to give pleasure. By all these happiness alone is plainly desired. For each man holds that to be the highest good, which he seeks before all others. But we have defined the highest good to be happiness. Wherefore what each man desires above all others, he holds to be a state of happiness.

Wherefore you have each of these placed before you as the form of human happiness: wealth, honors, power, glory and pleasure. Epicurus considered these forms alone, and accordingly determined upon pleasure as the highest good, because all the others seemed but to join with it in bringing enjoyment to the mind.

But to return to the aims of men: their minds seem to seek to regain the highest good, and their memories seem to dull their powers. It is

as though a drunken man were seeking his home, but could not remember the way thither. Can those people be altogether wrong whose aim it is to lack nothing? No, there is nothing which can make happiness so perfect as an abundant possession of good things, needing naught that belongs to others, but in all ways sufficing for itself. Surely those others too are not mistaken who think that what is best is also most worthy of reverence and respect. It cannot be any cheap or base thing, to attain which almost all men aim and strive. And is power not to be accounted a good thing? Surely it is: can that be a weak thing or forceless, which is allowed in all cases to excel? Is renown of no value? We cannot surrender this; that whatever is most excellent, has also great renown. It is hardly worth saying that happiness has no torturing cares or gloom, and is not subject to grief and trouble; for even in small things, the aim is to find that which it is a delight to have and to enjoy. These, then, are the desires of men: they long for riches, places of honor, kingdoms, glory, and pleasure; and they long for them because they think that thereby they will find satisfaction, veneration, power, renown and happiness. It is the good then which men seek by their different desires; and it is easy to show how great a force nature has put therein, since in spite of such varying and discordant opinions, they are all agreed in the goal they seek, that of the highest good.

There is no doubt that these roads to happiness are no roads, and they cannot lead any man to any end whither they profess to take him. I would show you shortly with what great evils they are bound up. Would you heap up money? You will need to tear it from its owner. Would you seem brilliant by the glory of great honors? You must kneel before their dispenser, and in your desire to surpass other men in honor, you must debase yourself by setting aside all pride. Do you long for power? You will be subject to the wiles of all over whom you have power, you will be at the mercy of many dangers. You seek fame? You will be drawn to and fro among rough paths, and lose all freedom from care. Would you spend a life of pleasure? Who would not despise and cast off such servitude to so vile and brittle a thing as your body? How petty are all the aims of those who put before themselves the pleasures



of the body, how uncertain is the possession of such? In bodily size will you ever surpass the elephant? In strength will you ever lead the bull, or in speed the tiger? Look upon the expanse of heaven, the strength with which it stands, the rapidity with which it moves, and cease for a while to wonder at base things. This heaven is not more wonderful for those things than for the design which guides it. How sweeping is the brightness of outward form, how swift its movement, yet more fleeting than the passing of the flowers of spring. But if, as Aristotle says, many could use the eyes of lynxes to see through that which meets the eye, then if they saw into the organs within, would not that body, though it had the most fair outside of Alcibiades, seem most vile within? Wherefore it is not your own nature, but the weakness of the eyes of them that see you, which makes you seem beautiful. But consider how in excess you desire the pleasures of the body, when you know that howsoever you admire it, it can be reduced to nothing by a three-day fever. To put all these points then in a word: these things cannot grant the good which they promise; they are not made perfect by the union of all good things in them; they do not lead to happiness as a path thither; they do not make men blessed.

Since then you have seen the form both of the imperfect and the perfect good, I think I should now show you where lies this perfection of happiness. In this I think our first inquiry must be whether any good of this kind can exist in the very nature of a subject; for we must not let any vain form of thought make us miss the truth of this matter. But there can be no denial of its existence, that it is as the very source of all good. For if anything is said to be imperfect, it is held to be so by some loss of its perfection. Wherefore if in any kind of thing a particular seems imperfect, there must also be a perfect specimen in the same kind. For if you take away the perfection, it is impossible even to imagine whence could come the so-called imperfect specimen. For nature does not start from degenerate or imperfect specimens, but starting from the perfect and ideal, it degenerates to these lower and weaker forms. If, then, as we have shown above, there is an uncertain and imperfect hap-

piness to be found in the good, then there must doubtless be also a sure and perfect happiness therein.

### SIR PHILIP GIBBS, 1877-

English journalist and author

I SUPPOSE WHAT we are all struggling for in this turmoil is a fair chance of happiness for ourselves as individuals, and for the rest if possible. Warfare by high explosives or high finance has that as its ultimate purpose. All political theories, conflicts, experiments, are inspired by the belief that upon their successful issue depends the happiness of great numbers of men and women. That is the eternal quest of mankind.

It is assumed by many people as a matter of course that if material prosperity is on a high scale the sum of human happiness is thereby increased, and that if the wealth of a nation is reduced, unhappiness is the result. Carrying out this argument to its logical conclusion, it would be evident that the richer one is, the happier one is, and yet that is acknowledged as a falsity by all who have come in contact with rich people or have laid their own hands on considerable wealth. Many of them are extremely unhappy. This wealth of theirs does not seem to satisfy their souls, though they "enjoy," as it is called, every comfort and most luxuries. On the other hand, some of them did—I doubt whether they do—attain a certain serenity of mind, a certain sense of well-being, a certain harmony of life—I am thinking of the old aristocracy and landed gentry—which might well be called happiness as far as human beings are by their nature capable of that peculiar sensation.

In planning for the future of this world of ours—that blessed word "planning" has taken possession of our imagination—it might be well to consider what are the essential needs of the human mind and body to

attain something like happiness. Such an enquiry might have an effect upon economic theories and political discussions, for what will be the good of the industrialization of backward nations, or the increase of wealth and its better distribution, if at the end of the adventure happiness has slipped out of the program?

I remember rowing on the Lake of Geneva—Lake Leman, as it is properly called—with an intellectual Bolshevik who was devoting his mind and time to the left wing of the Labour cause. He was bitter about the exploitation of the working classes. He was all for the redistribution of wealth. He was an avowed Communist. But forgetting those convictions for a few moments, he began talking about the Swiss people. He thought they were “disgusting.” He was intellectually distressed by their bourgeois comfort, their smug prosperity, this state of theirs in which there were no rich and no poor, but a general level of middle-class well-being.

“But my dear man,” I observed, “surely the Swiss people have reached that state which is the goal of your Communist friends? Surely that is the whole purpose of the Russian adventure—to raise the standard of living among the proletariat until they all enjoy such prosperity as this?”

“It is spiritually stifling,” he said. “It’s all so damned smug.”

If one accepted his point of view—and I don’t—it would make an absurdity of all the efforts to raise the standard of living in the world’s democracy. And yet there is scarcely a doubt, I imagine, that prosperity is not the infallible way to felicity. The mind of man is singularly discontent, and comfort isn’t enough. Sometimes he will deliberately prefer discomfort, if there is an adventure in it, like polar explorers who volunteer for frightful hardships, or hunters of beasts—women among them—who will endure tropical heats, thirst, malaria, flies, dirt, for the sake of killing a tiger or snap-shotting a gorilla. Give a man a tremendous impulse of excitement for some purpose in which his whole spirit is engaged—war, unfortunately, is like that to many men—and they will be contemptuous of bodily discomforts this side of agony, and of the ordinary amenities of civilized life. It was astonishing—and one must admit it—how little the lack of comfort, even to the minimum demanded by all human beings in a civilized state, affected in the last war

the spirits of men who had been brought up in good homes in which there was beauty as well as luxury. Apart from the nerve-breaking effect of high explosives and all the menace of death about them, great numbers of men found trench life quite endurable. Before their nerves went to pieces, young officers made themselves at home in dugouts which would have been regarded with disgust by ancient cave men, and rather enjoyed the joke of having their meals on a packing-case lit by a candle stuck in a beer bottle. Gentlemen of England who had been careful of their clothes found themselves plastered up to the ears in mud after a night raid, and never groused at that aspect of war. It was something quite different which made them loathe the job. Some of them disliked rats and other vermin, but quite a number were prepared to accept even those companions with a grin and a joke. It is true, I think, to say that for a time—a week or two—a month or two—the very freedom from the ordinary comforts, conveniences, and luxuries of modern civilization was an enjoyable adventure to many minds. It is why people go on picnics, and hire caravans, and mess about in old clothes, and do all such kinds of drudgery as washing up, and cooking their own meals with inadequate utensils, as the best kind of holiday. So comfort is not always essential to happiness. One wants a change now and then even from that.

Where in this world has one found most happiness, most laughter, most natural gaiety of spirit? Perhaps the answer to that would give one a clue to the needs of life and to relative values. It might be one solution of the economic problem and this pessimism which hangs over us all. I should say in my experience, that one finds most gaiety, if not most happiness—perhaps it is not the same thing—among the intellectual Bohemians. They are students not richly endowed with this world's goods, young professional men, struggling for fame and fortune but a long way off both, artists, theatrical folk, journalists. But those are pre-war memories and perhaps that crowd is not so gay as it used to be because they have less hope ahead. Still, temperament has a lot to do with it, and they have a certain carelessness of things that seem very important to more conventional minds. An artist thinks nothing important when

he is at his job, except the idea, the form, the colour which he is trying to get down on a bit of canvas. He forgets his food while he is engaged in this operation. In a pair of old pants and a flannel shirt he is a lord of life if things are going well with his blobs of paint, if he has a notion that he is capturing nature, or expressing his inmost soul—by what is often a horrible creation to his future critics and perhaps even to his own future judgment. I know, because I have tried, as an amateur, going hungry to get in some good shadows, sitting on damp grass with imminent risk of pneumonia, spoiling a good suit of clothes, neglecting domestic duties, and not worrying except over a mess of paint. Some of these artists I have known live cheap in squalid hotels somewhere in the neighbourhood of beauty. They trudge the countryside, heavily burdened with their packs. Nobody is likely to buy their work at any price that would give them luxury, unless they meet a miracle on the highway. But they get a lot of interest out of life. They laugh quite a lot over a bottle of cheap wine in some *estaminet* or *Gasthaus*. They smoke foul tobacco or innumerable cigarettes. One might say they are happy now and then. They have good moments.

Youth, of course, has something to do with happiness. Youth puts up a wonderful resistance to poverty, foul conditions, extreme discomfort. I once heard laughter in Russia in time of famine. It was in St. Petersburg—now Leningrad—and I walked through the silent streets deep in snow with a friend of mine. That day we had seen the bodies of many people who had died after starvation and typhus, heaped together in a big shed. We had seen groups of the old bourgeois, sweeping snow in the squares—old gentlemen, with bits of astrakhan still clinging to their coat collars, with bowler hats, rather battered, which they had once worn in offices and banks now closed and uninhabited. We had seen women, dirty and emaciated, who had once been great ladies, now standing in the market place selling sunflower seeds or small cakes. But as we walked back at night from the Mariensky Theatre, which was still performing opera for a hungry proletariat—it was the worst time in the early days of Communism—we heard the sound of laughter. It was a party of boys and girls going home after the theatre. Certainly they had not had enough to eat. No one had in Russia at that time. But they were

not so hungry that they couldn't laugh—at some jest of youth—at some merriment in their own hearts. I thought it wonderful, and could have wept.

And they were Russians again—the refugees from revolution—who seemed to me strangely happy—at least with no outward sign of despair—on the island of Prinkipo, off Constantinople, where they were living for a time in Turkish villas, rationed by the British government. They had lost everything, except what they had brought away from the wreckage of their lives in a few chests or packs. Some of them had been great aristocrats, others rich bourgeois. They had been brought up in luxury and all comfort. Now they were living a gypsy life in this island of exquisite beauty, with the sun above them and a blue sea around them. There was incessant playing of balalaikas. They danced on a wooden plank laid down on the grass. They sat around in groups, talking, talking, and often laughing. The past was a terror behind them. The future was uncertain and stark ahead. Yet, here and now, these people, who had been stripped of everything which seemed of value, these delicate ladies of Russia, these gentlemen, seemed to have no anxieties. They were like people shipwrecked on a desert island who find some happiness in having escaped death, in this fellowship of poverty and hardship, in this freedom from convention, in this adventure of primitive realities. They had courage, spirit, even gaiety, though I dare say they wept sometimes; and whatever one may think about the Russian character—personally I find it adorable in many qualities—one must salute those millions of refugees, and especially the women of the old aristocracy, who, after Prinkipo and other sanctuaries to which they first escaped, found their way all over Europe, setting up little shops and restaurants, starting all kinds of businesses, entertaining the world by their singing and dancing, becoming needlewomen, milliners, modistes, suffering dire poverty very often, driven from one city to another in times of depression, but always having some reserve of gaiety and charm and laughter. It is possible that they found the way in some measure to happiness through the most tragic misfortune that has ever befallen their class and kind.

Anyhow, it is clear that happiness for which we are all seeking is not

dependent upon economic prosperity of any high standard, if the spirit finds other compensations. The greatest compensation of all youth is romantic love, which does not need any luxury of furnishing for its bowers. A bed-sitting-room, with or without a carpet, may be all that love needs for perfect bliss, and better than a king's palace hung with tapestries, crowded with treasures of art and beauty. In the *Vie de Bohème*, Mimi hung her petticoat across the window to make a curtain, and her lover was enchanted. Those Bohemians of Paris made a banquet of some thin soup—*croûtes au pot*—a roll of bread and bottle of cheap wine. The lovers of Charles Dickens—David Copperfield, Nicholas Nickleby—had a hard fight with poverty, but in their ill-furnished lodgings they had no sense of squalor when romantic emotion, a sense of ecstasy, gave a glamour to a horsehair sofa or a threadbare carpet.

One sees, therefore, that all this struggle of modern life for monetary reward, additional comfort, more and more luxury, is exaggerated in its anxieties and stresses, if happiness is the purpose which spurs us on. At least it is true to say that there are moments in life when those things are of no value whatever compared with the mental or spiritual joy which may come without them in a hut or a hovel. Perhaps, then, we are mistaken in attaching so much importance to material prosperity, although, no doubt, there must be a decent minimum.

Some men have found happiness, or some ease for mental distress, or some spiritual ecstasy, in a deliberate renunciation of all material wealth. Francis of Assisi was one of them, and he did so with no moroseness but with a strange gaiety and joyousness, embracing poverty as his bride, as though he had found the ideal beauty. He had been a bright young spark in his time, singing the bawdy love-songs of the troubadours, dressed richly like Chaucer's squire, having all the gifts of life which came to a young gentleman of Italy. Then one day he exchanged clothes with a beggar, and gave away the money in his wallet, and went about doing menial work. Of course his rich father thought he had gone mad or bad. He was shut up in a dark room for a while, and then haled before a civil court. But Francis went on with his own idea of happiness, and at the age of twenty-six stripped himself even further of comfort

and wore only one garment of brown cloth, and went with bare feet along the dusty roads, singing the old troubadour love-songs, but with new words in praise of Christ, his hero. He went among the lepers and the outcasts, serving them. And other young gentlemen of Italy followed him and thought he had found the best way of life. By the time Francis was thirty-seven years of age his brotherhood, vowed to poverty, numbered five thousand, and was always increasing. It was poverty that was no joke. They begged for their food, and often went hungry. They slept on the bare earth, and were often wet and cold. Doubtless they were dirty and verminous. But all evidence proves that they had a strange mystical gaiety. Francis himself was a man of mirth. He enjoyed himself because of a tremendous love in his heart like a fire. He preached to his little brothers, the birds, and loved all things in nature. He laughed along the dusty roads.

He never worried about the next day's meal. Such subjects as the gold standard, or the rate of exchange, or the burden of income tax, did not perplex his spirit. He had no income. That simplified many problems. He was, one imagines, extremely happy because of some spiritual vision which danced before his eyes. His followers exist nowadays, even in this machine age, when material things seem so important. I have met them now and then, in time of war as well as in peace. They are all wonderfully cheerful, with a simple serenity which one sees in their eyes. It is very odd—considering all the worry of other people about their wages and rewards.

Perhaps if one could eliminate worry there would be a better chance of happiness. It is possible that half or more of our financial anxieties are due to lack of security. This desperate competition is not always for material benefit—more motor-cars, more gadgets—but for security in the future, for old age, for times of sickness, for the education of a family. If all these things were assured there might be more serenity and a sense of peace. It is one of the arguments for Socialism or Communism. Those systems, if they worked, would eliminate the fretfulness of the competitive spirit, by assuring everyone of a fair share of whatever is going. Unfortunately present experiments in that direction are liable to eliminate the primitive needs of life, and life itself.



There are certain essential necessities, even to keep alive a Francis of Assisi—even if one has a spiritual ecstasy, or a Stoic indifference to comfort, or some ideal making for forgetfulness. Poverty cannot always be welcomed as a bride. It is sometimes a demon, a tyrant, a monster of cruelty, devouring the beauty of women and the flesh of babes. It was so in Vienna after the war, when over sixty per cent of the children were stricken with rickets for lack of milk and fats, when young girls fainted at their work and died of malnutrition. German labourers, living on a scanty allowance of potatoes and cabbage, lost their physical strength. . . .

People may endure the most severe deprivations of ordinary comfort, the grimmest poverty, and make a joke of it for a little while, under the influence of some emotion like that of war or love or high adventure, but it needs an unquenchable flame of the spirit to endure it as the ordinary way of life year after year, especially when it is ugly and squalid and unromantic, as in modern industrialized civilization. It is easier to be poor in the country, away from mean streets, much easier when the sun is shining over that country, as in southern Italy and France. One can sleep in the sun. One can go lightly clad, or naked, and feel no hardship under a blue sky, with a blue sea lapping the coast-line. One cannot live like that with any sense of happiness in Walworth and Bermondsey, or Chicago and Pittsburgh; though even there, life could be simplified in its minimum requirements to ease mental distress due, not so much to physical hardship, as to mental anguish because people believe that they must dress in a certain way, eat certain kinds of food, have certain forms of entertainment, which are not really essential for happiness.

The terrors of poverty are exaggerated by social conventions, by snobishness, and that awful tyranny of "keeping up with the Joneses," but having known poverty in its milder forms, I fully admit its limitations and drawbacks. Having seen it in its acute form during time of famine in Russia, in English slumland before the war, in other cities abroad, I know its cruelty. There must be a minimum of food, shelter, clothing, warmth, for the human being and his chance of happiness, and beyond

that there must be some touch of beauty, some measure of amusement, some sense of spiritual well-being.

But what I am trying to arrive at is the standard of life and the relative values which should be within reach of a civilized community as the basis of such common happiness as men and women may fairly expect. I have a kind of conviction that a great deal of this modern economic struggle for wealth, this frenzied competition, is really purposeless, if happiness is the purpose.

It depends how much one can get out of life in relation to work and wages. The English people are supposed to have a very high standard of living, the highest in Europe, and that is not saying much, these days. Certainly their wages when they work are higher than those in Germany and France. They don't work so much. But I don't think they get as much out of life in real happiness as, for example, Bavarian peasants. I don't think the people of London have quite so good a time as the people of Paris, though they earn much more. One hears Italian artisans singing at their work, but seldom an English artisan. On smaller wages foreign folk make more out of the food they buy—cook it better. In Garmisch or Mittenwalde their little houses are painted gaily with fairy-tale pictures. In French cafés on the *terrasses*, and in German beer-gardens, the ordinary folk sit out of doors drinking light beer, listening to the tinkle of an orchestra, talking, watching life pass by, pleasantly enjoying themselves, for the hundredth part of the sum spent in a London cinema, in the darkness thick with cigarette smoke. Somehow they have made life more beautiful about them, many of these foreign folk. I would rather earn thirty shillings a week or its Italian equivalent in Venice or Milan than three pounds a week—or even thirty—in Wigan or Oldham. Put to the choice, most people with a full knowledge of alternative values would agree with me.

It follows that wages should be reckoned not by numbers of pounds or dollars, but in purchasing power of good things—of beauty as well as bread, of a pleasant social intercourse as well as bathrooms, cheap forms of pleasure as well as cheap goods at Woolworth's. One seldom

sees that side of things mentioned by the economists. It is not alluded to in the speeches of left-wing orators. And yet these real values of life may be attained without much expenditure of money. Under a high wage system, or a low wage system, they may be secured by a method of life, by the character of a people, by something in the mind. They are outside the rates of exchange, and have very little to do with the gold standard.

Not that one can ignore economics and pretend that human nature may be happy in foul conditions. Our slum areas are still a robbery of human happiness. No method of life will create the chance of happiness if a large family has to live, eat, sleep in one miserable room, a breeding-place of vice and bitterness, unless it is a family of angels whom sometimes I have met in such places. No philosophy or beatific vision will make tolerable the lives of millions of men and women in industrial centres where the wheels have slowed down because of trade depression, and where youth, standing on the threshold of manhood or womanhood, finds no available job. But perhaps there would have been jobs—I think there would—if this civilization of ours had not over-emphasized the material values of machine-made wealth and had not strained every nerve to make bigger and bigger profits at the expense of less and less happiness for the mass of human beings. There may still be more jobs to go round, less squalor in congested districts, if money profit is subordinated, or at least allied, to mental and moral profits of a social life well balanced, well planned, and fairly shared, with the machine under strict control, and money made a token of exchange for goods and services, instead of a counter for financial gamblers, or promissory notes on the very doubtful future.

Poverty, wealth, are relative terms. Before the war money went much farther than now. A pound bought more goods. On three hundred a year I was passing rich. Therefore it doesn't matter much whether wages are high or low, provided they buy the same amount of things. The fact is forgotten by trade-union leaders and other politicians. High wages mean, as a rule, high costs of production, high prices, and dear living, so that in America a man was not really better off on several dollars a day than an Italian workingman on several lira a day. I believe

that if we could get this fact fixed firmly in our minds we should not be in such a blue funk about the possibility of a decrease in national wealth as it was based on international exports and the continual expansion of industry. By looking first to our method of life, by thinking first of the best values which count for happiness, we could all have a better time at a cheaper rate as measured in terms of money. Here is one way of escape from economic trouble.

The mind has to be considered, the spirit as well as the body. For happiness, or the chance of it, the mind must be fed, stimulated, kept interested. It is the dulness of life, the greyiness and drabness of so many lives, which are hard to bear in our modern industrialized state and all its mean streets. As one escape from it, even war has an allurements, even revolution, or crime, or vice. Men and women—youth especially—must have some adventure, something to take them out of themselves, some form of mental excitement beyond the drudgery of mechanical toil. The motor-car has given many this sense of relief. It is the chief value of that machine which has otherwise spoilt so much beauty and increased the nervous tension of our lives. Betting, dog-racing, football, and in other classes hunting, shooting, golf and tennis, provide the necessary stimulus of the human brain and body—the adventure of the leisure hour or the weekend. The cinema is the dope to which millions of women go as a relief from dull and drab monotony. They might do worse—some do—but they might do better.

This machine-made life of ours makes even amusement too impersonal and mechanical. It is so easy to switch on the wireless and hear other people making music. It was much more fun when, as in my young days, families provided their own, however amateurishly. Some of them played the violin rather well. The piano keys were well thumped.

The old songs were sung after supper. It was an education of character, a chance of self-expression and self-development denied now when the broadcasters do all the work, or when a gramophone and a pile of records kill the amateur musician. Nowadays people think how dull life must have been in the Middle Ages, when there was no chance of getting about, no cinemas, no wireless, no music-halls, no restaurants.

But those folk made their own amusements. They had their outdoor games and dances, their indoor games and dances. In the time of Charles II England was a nest of singing birds. Friends went to one another's houses with violas and double basses and flutes and fiddles. They played quartettes and sang glees and madrigals, which some of them, like Samuel Pepys, composed in their spare time. The village was seething with a simple kind of social activity, at harvest time, at Christmas, on feast days and holidays. The church was the centre of social life, and in olden times had its miracle plays, not so elaborate as that of Oberammergau, but permeated with the same spirit.

It would be good to revive some of all that. Here and there it is being revived in England. There are village players putting up good shows and revealing the tremendous amount of hidden talent for drama in the English character. Community singing has brought back the pleasure of a good chorus, in which the audience are also the performers. The pageant, which was all the rage before the war, revived the old interest of rural England for a time when villages and country towns spent a whole year of their spare time in making costumes, scenery, weapons, shields, and all the paraphernalia required for the show before rehearsing their scenes.

These things are vastly important in the search for happiness. They have been too much neglected by this industrial age, grinding the individuality out of men and women, crushing out character, and mechanizing pleasure.

I suppose what human nature is really trying to find in its eternal quest for happiness, is some system of government and society which will give to every individual a full and fair chance of developing his personality to the utmost, by interesting work and not too much of it, by security for himself and his family and his fellow humans—a sensitive and generous-hearted man cannot be happy if masses of human beings are suffering around him—by a decent minimum of comfort, and by liberty of thought and action restricted only by a code of honour which forbids him to be hurtful to his neighbours. In that liberty of thought and action he has his chance of adventure and delight, becom-

ing aware of beauty, penetrating farther into knowledge, getting more mastery over himself and his surroundings, reaching out to everything in life which is worth having for mind and body. It is this awareness to life and to its aspects of beauty which gives human nature its rich quality, the real wealth for which we are searching. Art, music, poetry, science, philosophy, have a value beyond material things because they reveal life and make us more alive to its rhythm, more sensitive to the mystical joys of form, colour, sound, touch, smell—those senses and perceptions by which our minds are illumined, and by which we experience those moments of ecstasy or of revelation which reconcile us to much that is painful and tragic in this world. These things are denied and thwarted by modern civilization, to masses of human beings. They have always been denied to the majority, though here and there, now and then, some men and women have achieved them by some inward genius or by some luck of circumstance. Of course we have to pay for being sensitive to beauty. It makes us also sensitive to pain. That is the penalty of education, and the tragic dilemma of the human mind.

The old landed gentry of Europe came nearer to these ideals of life, I imagine, than most others. It was their luck. They had a sense of security—now gone. They established—the best of them—a rather good harmony between the physical and intellectual sides of life. They loved sport and were not afraid of hard exercise in all weathers. They lived close to the earth and knew its flowers and beasts and all that went on in a woodland or an open field. Their ears were open to the song of birds, and the patter of rain on an old roof, and the ripple of water in a brook. They watched the seasons and the crops. This nature was in their blood and spirit. They were part of it—fine animals, well bred, and well fed. But the best of them were not without spiritual quality. They were well read as well as well fed. They had a touch of philosophy. They knew the wisdom of the classics. They knew something about art and had good pictures on their walls. They liked poetry—Pope or Byron—according to their age. They had good manners. They had a code which made them, on the whole, a kindly folk, courteous to those of their own standing, chivalrous to those below them in the social scale. They could talk in an easy way with gamekeepers, peasants,

ploughboys. They had a touch of the peasant and ploughboy in their own natures. They were not agonized by any spiritual doubts, but had a belief in a benevolent God, who was especially favourable to their type and class. They said their prayers, or slept a little, in their private pews. They had a sense of humour—a little crude at times—and laughed a good deal over a bottle of port. . . . I am not talking of the great aristocracy so much as of the landed gentry of more moderate rank and fortune, whose sons went into the army or the Church or became young lawyers and professional men, even sometimes scholars and poets.

The quest of happiness goes on from age to age, and the Holy Grail is never found. For the mind of man is never content and in his spirit there is a sword of pain. The more sensitive he becomes to the beauty and splendour of life, the more he suffers because of its tragedies, its horrors, and its inequalities. The more he loves—and that is the only way in which he can fulfil his nature—the more he agonizes, because love is itself a pain as well as a joy, caused by the essential loneliness of the individual and the thought of death. The more knowledge he attains, the more elusive becomes the ultimate mystery of truth. Only by a supreme faith in a divine meaning behind all these appearances can he find any reconciliation between his yearnings and his disillusion. Without some faith in some God there is only despair in the end.

All that we can hope for is the minimum of chance of happiness, and that surely is the divine right of every individual life, utterly denied now to millions of human beings because of the greed, the cruelty, and the stupidity—above all, perhaps, the stupidity—of those who hold or claim the power of shaping man's destiny. Among those millions of thwarted and tortured lives there is a sense of hopelessness creeping up into the minds of men and women, even if they are favoured by fortune still, but deeply anxious about the future of this civilization which is threatened by collapse.

Yet because of that fear and threat I believe that human intelligence is getting to work at last after this moratorium. The world has still the chance—but not for long—of so shaping a new order out of this present chaos that there will be less inequality, more security for the masses, a

revival of prosperity more widely spread, and a broader, kindlier sense of human fellowship among all nations and races. It will release the human mind from the dread of war, from the downfall of its economic life, and from the worst cruelties of a machine-driven age. We have that chance. It is for the younger mind to seize it quickly—quickly.

### HONORÉ de BALZAC, 1799-1850

French novelist. His novels and short stories under the general title of *La Comédie Humaine* is one of the monumental works of literature, as Balzac himself is one of the world's foremost literary figures.

NAPOLEON HIMSELF COULD dine only once, and he could not have more mistresses than a student at the Capucine. Happiness depends on what lies between the soles of your feet and the crown of your head; and whether it cost a million or a hundred louis, the actual amount of pleasure that you receive rests entirely with you, and is just exactly the same in any case.

Not knowing that the mainspring of happiness is in ourselves, some demand it of the circumstances of life.

All happiness depends on courage and work. I have had many periods of wretchedness, but with energy, and above all, with illusions, I pulled through them all.



\*❖\*❖\*❖\*  
A Cheerful Heart  
\*❖\*❖\*❖\*

MARCUS AURELIUS, 121-180

Roman emperor whose *Meditations* express  
with great beauty the stoic way of life

"WOE IS ME, that I should have lived to see this day!" Nay, say rather, "Happy am I, that under this stroke I remain of good cheer, uncrushed by the present and unappalled by the future!" For such a blow might have fallen on any man, but how few could have sustained it with equanimity! Why then count the one a disaster rather than hail the other as a blessing? Wilt thou say that human misfortune can consist in aught save deviation from man's nature? Or thinkest thou that what is in accord with Nature's will can be a deviation from that selfsame Nature? What then? Thou hast but learned what her will is. And can this mischance rob thee of justice, high-mindedness, temperance, good sense, caution, truthfulness, decency, freedom, and all the rest whose presence it is that enables this nature of man's to come by her own?

In conclusion, then, remember, if aught chance which tends to drive thee into grief, to apply this principle: "This thing is no misfortune, but the ability to bear it with fortitude is a blessing indeed."

Trouble not thyself by pondering life in its entirety. Strive not to comprehend in one view the nature and number of the burdens that, belike, will fall to thy share. Rather, as each occasion arises in the present put this question to thyself: "Where lies the unbearable, unendurable part of this task?" Confession will put thee to the blush! Next recall to mind that neither past nor future can weigh thee down, only the present. And the present will shrink to littleness if thou but set it apart, assign it its boundaries, and then ask thy mind if it avail not to bear even this!

One man's pleasure lies here, another's there. Mine lies in preserving a healthy mind;—a mind that shrinks from no man, and from naught that befalls man, but beholds all things with a kindly glance of welcome, and uses them as they have merited.

Up and use the present that is within thy gift! He, to whom future fame is all in all, forgets that posterity will be composed of the same type of men as those who awake his disgust in the present, and as far removed from immortality as they. And, at the best, what imports it to thee whether they shall raise their voices in thy praise or dispraise, and whether they shall think either evil or good of thy memory?

Take me and cast me wheresoever thou wilt. For there, too, will the godhead within me abide calm and propitious; content, that is, if it but feel and act in harmony with its proper constitution.

Is this thing of sufficient moment that my soul should fall into despondency and sink beneath herself, now dejected, now expanding, now collapsing, now affrighted? Nay, what canst thou find that is worth such a price?

Nothing can happen to man save what is incidental to man's nature. Similarly, the vicissitudes of an ox, a vine, or a stone are peculiar to the constitution of oxen, vines, and stones. If then the chances that befall each of us are customary and natural, what ground is there for discontent? Universal Nature bears nothing but the bearable.

If the source of thy pain lies without, it is not the external that troubles thee, but thy verdict thereon, a verdict which it rests with thee to annul at any moment. If it lies within thy character, change thy principles. For who can say thee nay? And so too, if thy grief proceeds from the omission of some activity that seems good to thee, why not let the grieving be, and act?

Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in mind with perfect and simple dignity, and feeling of affection, and freedom, and justice; and to give thyself relief from all other thoughts. And thou wilt give thyself relief, if thou doest every act of thy life as if it were the last, laying aside all carelessness and passionate aversion from the commands of reason, and all hypocrisy, and self-love, and discontent

with the portion which has been given to thee. Thou seest how few the things are, the which if a man lays hold of, he is able to live a life which flows in quiet, and is like the existence of the gods; for the gods on their part will require nothing more from him who observes these things.

### DEAN INGE, 1860-

Former dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. He is widely known for his originality of thought and for a quality of pessimism which earned for him the soubriquet, "The Gloomy Dean." His best-known book is *Lay Thoughts of a Dean*.

THE WISE MAN who wrote the so-called Proverbs of Solomon says: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." We really know very little about the people whom we meet. We see their faces, which are not much more than masks, but we cannot read their hearts. Robert Browning thanks God that the meanest of his creatures has two soul-sides, one to face the world with, one to show a woman when he loves her. It is only in the intimacy of family life, or in that rare thing, a perfect friendship, that the veil is partially drawn aside. And even then we do not lay bare our hearts entirely.

Who are really the happiest people? It is odd that we have no answer ready; for with most of us happiness is "our being's end and aim." We are sometimes in doubt whether our own balance is on the right side or the wrong. Looking back, I think I can separate the years when I was happy and those when I was unhappy. But perhaps at the time I should have judged differently. We are never either so happy or so miserable as we suppose ourselves to be.

From *Lay Thoughts of a Dean* by Dean Inge. Reprinted by permission of Putnam & Company, Limited.

The successful man generally tells us that he was happiest while he was still struggling for his success, or sometimes before he discovered that an ambitious career was open to him. As a rule, the game of life is worth playing, but the struggle is the prize.

It is generally supposed that the young are happier than the old. This seems to me very doubtful. Young people are often very unhappy, torn by conflicting elements in their characters, which, after a time, come to some kind of a mutual understanding. Robert Browning boldly claims that old age is "the best of life," and some old people agree with him.

The married are supposed to be happier than the single. They are certainly less prone to commit suicide; but suicide is not a very good test, and it has been pointed out that married people with no children are not much less suicidally inclined than bachelors and spinsters. Still, as a rule, marriage is probably the happiest state. It all depends on whether the pair are well matched, and very bad choices are, I think, the exception.

On the whole, the happiest people seem to be those who have no particular cause for being happy except the fact that they are so—a good reason, no doubt. And yet I should not choose a naturally contented temperament as my first request from a fairy godmother. It would be unfortunate if I said, "I wish to be the happiest man in England," and promptly found myself locked up in an asylum, a cheerful lunatic who believed himself to be the Emperor of China. For all we know to the contrary, the happiest man in England may be a madman, and none of us would wish to change places with him. And even if the always cheerful person is perfectly sane, he is without the "splendid spur" which most men need if they are to do much with their lives. George Borrow, the author of *Lavengro*, thus addresses those who suffer from depression: "How dost thou know that this dark principle is not thy best friend? It may be the mother of wisdom and great works; it is the dread of the horror of the night which makes the pilgrim hasten on his way. When thou feelest it nigh, let thy safety word be Onward! If thou tarry, thou art overwhelmed. Courage! Build great works: 'tis urging thee—it is ever nearest the favourites of God—the fool knows little of it. Thou would'st be joyous, would'st thou? Then be a fool. What great work

was ever the result of joy, the puny one? Who have been the wise ones, the mighty ones, the conquering ones of the earth? The joyous? I believe it not."

This is rhetorical. But I have noticed with surprise how often the biographies of great men reveal that they were subject to frequent and severe fits of depression, which the world knew nothing of. Perhaps it is only shallow natures who never feel the tragedy of existence. I can sympathise with the man who wrote: "Send me hence ten thousand miles, from a face which always smiles."

And yet those who might take comfort from Borrow's praise of melancholy have to remember that the Sermon on the Mount goes far towards ranking worry as one of the deadly sins. Spinoza agrees: Sadness (*tristitia*) is never justifiable, he says. The medieval monks who must have known the moral dangers of boredom, placed among the Seven Deadly Sins one which they called *Acedia*. They describe it as a compound of dejection, sloth, and irritability, which makes a man feel that no good is worth doing. We have forgotten the word, and when we are attacked by the thing we blame our nerves or our livers. But perhaps the monks were right.

Religion is a great source of happiness, because it gives us the right standard of values, and enables us to regard our troubles as "a light affliction which is but for a moment." But the religious temperament is susceptible to more grievous fits of misery than any other.

We hear sometimes of the gaiety which prevails in a monastery or nunnery. I confess that this vapid spiritual hilarity rather irritates me. Running away from life ought not to make people happy. Unworldliness based on knowledge of the world is the finest thing on earth; but unworldliness based on ignorance of the world is less admirable.

The busy are happier than the idle, and the man who has found his work much happier than the man who has not found it. Recognition by others is essential to all but the strongest and proudest virtue. I think I should put it third among the gifts which I should ask from the fairy godmother above mentioned. I should wish first for wisdom, like King Solomon; and by wisdom I mean a just estimate of the relative values

of things. My second wish would be for domestic happiness, and my third for the approval of my fellows.

Napoleon is said to have recommended "a hard heart and a good digestion" as the chief conditions of happiness. I have nothing to say against the second; but a life without affection and sympathy could give only a very negative kind of happiness.

Can we say that some periods of history were happier than others? Nobody can doubt that we have fallen upon evil times; and it seems to be true that we take public affairs much more tragically than they did in the eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson lived through the American war, the greatest misfortune that has ever happened to the British Empire. But this is how he delivers himself about public calamities.

Boswell: "If I were in Parliament, I should be vexed if things went wrong." Johnson: "That's cant, sir. Public affairs vex no man." Boswell: "Have they not vexed yourself a little, sir? Have you not been vexed by all the turbulence of this reign?" Johnson: "Sir, I have never slept an hour less, nor eaten an ounce less meat."

We are not so philosophical. . . . But all through the war, when things were looking bad, I tried to remember another scene from English history. We are told that in the days of the Commonwealth Bulstrode Whitelocke, Ambassador to the Hague, was tossing about through the night in anxiety about the condition of his country. An old servant, lying in the same room, addressed him: "Sir, may I ask you a question?" "Certainly," replied the Ambassador. "Sir, did God govern the world well before you came into it?" "Undoubtedly." "And will He rule the world well when you have gone out of it?" "Undoubtedly." "Then, sir, can you not trust Him to rule the world well while you are in it?" The tired Ambassador turned on his side and fell asleep.

## BOOTH TARKINGTON, 1869-1946

American novelist, author of many entertaining, realistic and satirical stories of American life and character

TWO OR THREE years ago, one of those little stories that go over the country came from a Boston clergyman of conspicuous veracity.

On a New England country road he met an aged man who had been bedridden for several months, but was now up and about again. "I'm delighted to see you looking so well," the minister said. "I hope you've entirely recovered your health."

"I'm getting along fine, thank you, Doctor."

"Have you a good appetite?"

"Appetite? I should say I have! Never eat so much in all my born days!"

"You sleep well?"

"Sleep?" the aged man exclaimed. "Never slept so good in my whole life! I'm in fine health, Doctor, fine!" Then he added cheerfully:

"'Course I've lost my *mind*, but I don't miss it."

Now I have heard kind-hearted people laugh at this little story—even kind-hearted people who knew the aged man himself and were aware of the calamity that had befallen him. Nor, hearing their laughter, did I find the laughers less kind-hearted than I had thought them, nor were they so. Nevertheless, there was something in their mirth that brought me to a question: How does it come about that gentle people can sometimes find calamity evocative not of their sympathetic pain but actually of their humor? And since tender-hearted people could not laugh at what they look upon as a calamity, the question may be put in another way: When do we feel that a calamity is *not* a calamity?

For the answer, I would go down to the village drug store opposite

the post office. There the wise men collect before "mail time" every afternoon, and there, if you go often enough and listen long enough, you can hear anything. You will not need to go often, however, or listen long in order to hear something bearing upon the question about calamity.

"Yes, sir," one of the wise men tells the others; "George Thompson put every cent he had in the world into that mill, and now it's up and burned to the ground without a cent of insurance. Not a single cent! All George has got left between him and the poorhouse is that old nineteen-hundred-and-ten Ford he comes to town in, and his wife says he still owes for *it*. Yes, sir; sixty-four years old, and poor as the day he was born! They tell me his wife is taking on something terrible. Neighbors say she just sets in the house with her head in her hands—kind of rocks back and forward, moaning-like—and she hasn't had a mouthful of nourishment since the fire, day-before-yesterday noon. They can't coax her to. She thought she and George were all fixed for their old age with that mill, and now it's gone, and they're no better than beggars. She says she just hopes to die. I certainly am sorry for that poor woman!"

"Yes, and for poor old George too," a listener adds. "It's a pretty dreadful thing to put all your eggs in one basket, the way George did, and then drop the basket. I certainly am sorry for George Thompson."

"For *George!*" the narrator of the misfortune exclaims incredulously. "Sorry for George? Why, to hear *George* talk you'd think he was going to have that mill rebuilt and working away again inside of a week! He's got no more sense of what's happened to him than a rabbit, and you'd think he was pretty near a millionaire right now, to listen to him. He's talking just as big about all what he's going to do as he ever did. It's the old lady *I'm* sorry for; but George—my stars, man, don't waste no pity on *George!*"

The inference here seems to be that we need not feel sorry for sufferers who do not suffer (so to say), and we may draw the same conclusion from the laughter of the kind-hearted people who heard the story of the aged man's losing his mind without being troubled by the loss. In each instance, calamity has befallen a person who seems unaware of its gravity, and remains as cheerful after the misfortune as before. We may be



astounded by such cheerfulness; we may be amused by the incongruity of it; we may be, indeed, contemptuous of it, or even horrified by it; but so long as the victim retains it we seem to feel that we may properly be at least as cheerful as he is.

But this seems to imply another question: When the victim of calamity realizes his misfortune, yet retains his good spirits, do we feel that he has not really suffered a loss at all? And again for the answer I would walk down to the village drug store and listen.

A troubled woman holding a sturdy little girl tightly by the hand buys a "cough remedy" over the counter. "It scared me so," she tells the druggist, "I came right down to get something for little Rita."

"Has she been coughing very hard?" the druggist asks.

"No, not so very," the mother admits. "She only coughed a few times this morning, and it might of been a cough from the stomach at that, because she put too much molasses on her cakes for breakfast; but with anything like what's happened right next door, I expect I'm a little jumpy, and *any* kind of a cough from Rita scares me. Only nine days ago little Fanny Potter was playing with Rita in our back yard, and you wouldn't thought she could ever have a thing the matter with her. Nine days ago—and now she's gone! No wonder I don't like to hear Rita cough, don't you think so, Mr. Grewe?"

"Oh, I don't expect *her* cough's so very serious," the druggist returns. "How is Mrs. Potter taking her loss?"

"Oh, my!" Rita's mother moans. "I saw her for just a minute and I can't *bear* to think of her, yet I can't get her face out of my mind for a single minute. The minister's been there four or five times, working with her; but her family all say it hasn't done a bit of good, so far. If she could only be like Mrs. Will Trueblood!

"When the Truebloods lost their little boy, two years ago, of course Mrs. Trueblood said she missed him terribly and all, but her faith upheld her. She said she knew little Junior was a bright angel, happy in heaven, and it would be impious to mourn him overmuch. She could smile and not cry when she spoke of him, almost right after the funeral, and it wasn't painful at all to go there and talk with her about it. In fact,

she was so calm in her mind, it was an inspiration and almost a pleasure, you might say, to talk to her. If poor Mrs. Potter could only take *her* loss that way, we'd all feel a great deal better about it, Mr. Grewe."

Mr. Grewe agrees. "Yes, I wish she could. She's a good woman and I hate to think of her in so much trouble."

It is usually safe to draw general conclusions from the conversations in our village drug store, because most of the people who talk there are like most other people anywhere in the country, and so, interpreting this little dialogue over the counter, we find that if the faith of a bereft mother (or perhaps her "philosophy") helps her to withstand her grief, we can think of her almost cheerfully. And as what we sympathetically lament, when friends of ours "lose their money," is not the loss of the money, so, when a mother is bereft, it is not the death of the child that we most deeply deplore. What we "can't bear to think of" is the unhappiness caused by the loss.

It appears, then, that for people in a state of bereavement, we suffer not in proportion to the extent of the bereavement itself but in proportion to the amount of pain we think it brings them; and that, so far as our sympathies are concerned, we do seem to feel that the victim of calamity has suffered no loss at all if he has not lost his happiness. In other words, if we accept the verdict of our feelings, there is no loss except the loss of happiness, and so long as a man retains his happiness he can lose nothing, no matter what happens to him.

Now, thinking this over, I came to more questions: But if a man loses his life? Don't we look upon that as a loss of itself? Don't we feel that then he loses anything except happiness? And again searching light, I walked down once more to the village at "mail time."

I reached the drug store just in time to save my straw hat from ruin. A thunderstorm had been threatening the countryside for an hour, and then, after pretending to go away, it suddenly swung down venomously upon our little town beside the river. It was one of those storms that appear to have personal intentions; it seemed to mean to wash the village into the river, meanwhile searching the place with lightning and cursing the inhabitants in the outrageous voice of immediate thunder. One of

the wickedest discharges appeared to be meant for me in particular—the floods descended, and with them a flash of intolerable light that seemed to explode upon my very eyes as I entered the drug store. “Murder!” I gasped, and leaned against the counter.

“What you makin’ such a fuss about?” old Mr. Jezmiller asked brusquely. Mr. Jezmiller is one of our wise men, a former livery-stable owner, retired from business on account of automobiles, and crusty. “Nobody ain’t murdered you *yet*, has they? So what call you got to be hol-lerin’ ‘murder’ for, then, sence they ain’t?”

“I meant the lightning,” I explained. “It must have struck very close by.”

“Didn’t strike *you*, did it?” he said.

“No, it didn’t, but I thought—”

Mr. Jezmiller interrupted me. “You ‘thought,’ did you? Well, the second you knowed you was thinkin’ you knowed you wasn’t struck, so what’s the use your makin’ all this here fuss about it? One thing I never did have no patience with, it’s people that set up a squawkin’ over a little thunder and lightning. My soul! If you’re struck, you’re struck; that’s all there is *to* it. If you ain’t, you ain’t; and so long as you ain’t, what in the name o’ conscience are you *frettin’* about?”

I interposed an objection. “But that stroke was so close I don’t think I was quite sure it hadn’t hit me; that is, I wasn’t sure soon enough to keep from being nervous about it.”

“Why, certainly you was,” he said. “You knowed you was scared, and long as you know anything at all you know lightning ain’t hit you, because if it hits you, you don’t know *nothing*. That’s the purest kind of logic there is! When lightning hits you, it don’t give you no time to *worry* about it. Lightning’s supposed to be kind of quick! Am I right?”

He appealed not to me but to a group of three or four of our wise men who stood near by looking out at the tumultuous water from the sky. They seemed to feel that he was right, and he continued: “What I always used to tell my first wife about a thunder shower, I used to say, ‘My goodness, ain’t you got a single *bit* o’ gumption?’ She was so ‘fraid o’ lightning she’d always go put on her rubbers and stand with her feet

in two glass fruit dishes in the middle of the sitting-room as long as she could hear it thunder. 'My soul, woman!' I'd say to her. 'Lightning's the one thing that don't give you time enough to worry about what's takin' you off. So why don't you behave like me, and get the good out of it by enjoyin' of yourself a-lookin' at it?'"

"That's so," Mr. Watson, the retired township assessor, agreed, "Yet I did have a second cousin get struck by lightning once I was right sorry for. He was a fine young man and left a wife and four little children. Yes, sir, I was right sorry for him."

Mr. Jezmiller seemed to feel himself challenged. "I bet you didn't," he said testily. "You *think* you did; but it wasn't him you was sorry for; it was his wife and children. He never had no time to suffer."

"I *was* sorry for him though," Mr. Watson insisted stubbornly. "I said I was, and I was. I was sorrier for him than I was for his family. He left them right well off, and after they got over missing him a little while they had no special cause to trouble. But he was a man just getting ready to enjoy his life first rate. He'd been nominated for county treasurer that very spring, and he was sure to get elected. He was looking forward to it, and going to move to a nice house up at the county seat and have a big time and all, and he was what you might call kind of a happy-natured man, anyhow. Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Jezmiller, that I don't know what I'm talking about when I say I was sorry for a man like that when he got struck by lightning?"

"No," his opponent admitted. "In view of his likely goin' to enjoy makin' a lot of money out of the county treasurership and all, it seems like a hard case, and you got a right to claim you was sorry he had to miss what he was lookin' forward to so much. But what *I* say is: So far as just his gettin' hit by lightning goes, you wasn't sorry about *that*, or, if you was, you didn't show good sense. It's like a boy, for instance, lookin' forward to show day. Suppose his mother lets him oversleep that morning, and he misses the circus parade. You don't feel sorry for him because he was *asleep*; you only feel sorry for him account of his missin' the parade. Well, gettin' struck by lightning is prob'ly just about like goin' to sleep right quick. You wasn't sorry for your cousin because he

done that; you was only sorry about what he missed on *account* of it."

"I guess so," Mr. Watson said placably. "I presume you're right."

"You *know* I'm right!" Mr. Jezmiller corrected him. "Why ain't you man enough to say so?"

"All right," said the humbled Watson. "I know you are."

Now if Mr. Watson was well founded in this admission, and if Mr. Jezmiller was indeed right, then we look upon even the loss of life as of itself no loss to the loser. We say of a good citizen who has died that he was "a loss to the community," but it is then the community that we are sorry for; and sometimes we deplore the death of a useful man, saying, "He would have done so much good if he had lived"; but here again we lament for the survivors who lack his ministrations.

It is true that we may also feel sorry for such a man himself; but that is because we feel that doing good would have brought him happiness. A man may lose great opportunities, may lose his mind, may lose his liberty, his health, his life, his honor, or all of these and more; but if we think such loss entails no loss of his happiness, we feel no sympathetic suffering for him. The verdict of our drug store is that for any individual there is no real loss whatever except the loss of his happiness.

Long ago, in the village there was a boy who went away to wrestle with the populous world. He became a power in the land, accomplished many things for the good of his fellow men, and in time the village was mildly proud of him. Yet at the drug store a wise man said, one afternoon, "Of course he's a big thing, and he's done plenty of big works; but I bet he ain't a cent's worth happier than if he'd stayed right here like the rest of us, and never gone away."

Another said reprovingly, "Ah, but there's things worth more than happiness!"

"Are there?" the first said, with some satire. "What are they?"

"How about success?"

"Success? What's a man go after success for, except because he thinks it'll make him happy? It *don't* always make him happy; but he wouldn't go after it unless he thought it was going to."

"Well, then, how about the feeling that you've done right? You know

yourself a man'll often sacrifice his happiness rather than have the feeling that he's done wrong."

"Yes, because he knows that, though maybe he's going to feel pretty bad either way, he'll feel *better* if he does right. He does right because he knows he'll get more happiness out of it than if he did wrong. That's pretty near the gist of the way all religions try to teach people how to live. They say, 'Do right and you'll be happier—not just now, maybe, but in the long run—than if you do wrong.'

"The way religions try to get people to *behave* is by working it into their minds that a certain line of conduct is the only thing that can make 'em happy; and they call that certain line of conduct the 'right' way to behave. That's because the old prophets of the religions were wise enough to see that no man ever did *anything*—not a single thing that he had any choice about—except because he believed that doing it was going to make him happier than if he did something else, or didn't do anything at all."

"Whoa up!" the other party to the debate exclaimed. "Hold your horses a minute! How about a man that gets into a fight, for instance? Suppose you say something to me that makes me mad, and I hit you. Well, you're bigger than I am, and I know mighty well that if I hit you you're going to hit me back—wallop me in the face maybe and make my nose bleed. Yet I'm so mad I don't take time to think, I just let out with my fist and land on you, even though I know I'm going to get licked on account of it. Do you claim I do that to get more happiness?"

"Certainly you do. You're so mad at me, just that minute, you can't stand the suffering of not doing something to me. You hit me because you think you'll get more happiness out of hitting me than you will unhappiness out of my hitting you back. No, sir; when you tell me there's things worth more than happiness, I say, 'Not to the human race, there ain't!'"

And as the other wise men nodded, agreeing with him, the verdict of the drug store appeared to be expanded. Not only is there no loss to the individual except the loss of his happiness, but the search for happiness is the motive of all free human action. Yet here there seems to be a con-

tradition, in spite of the fact that the wise men pride themselves upon their logic. If you are searching for a thing, then assuredly you haven't it, and if we are forever seeking happiness we are forever lacking it. And, lacking it, how can we lose it?

But the contradiction is not a real one; it is only an apparent one. Of course what the wise men mean is that we are forever seeking for more happiness than we already have; the happiness we already have is the one thing of value to us in our lives, our one possible loss; and that our great guiding desire is to keep it and add to it.

Our most important state document calls it a self-evident truth that all men are entitled to the "pursuit of happiness." This does not mean that all men have no happiness, but that they possess a natural right to try to obtain more happiness than they already have. Evidently then, to be occupied in the pursuit of *more* happiness is the normal condition of free men, and, thus, the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States confirms the verdict of the village drug store. To increase our happiness would then appear to be the natural business of our lives.

Now if this *is* our natural business—and when the drug store and the framers of the Constitution agree, the rest of us might as well take the matter as established—how shall we best set about that business? From one viewpoint we are already engaged in it, since all our deliberate actions spring from our desire to succeed in it; but any business (even a natural one) will "run" better, will have more chances for success, if it be carried on not blindly but with some understanding.

Considering this natural business of ours then, we perceive that comparatively few people have *no* happiness; for a person who has none at all is a person who could be made no unhappier by any tragedy whatever. True, there are people who suffer grief so overwhelming that for a time they have no *consciousness* of happiness, and could feel no added misery if all mankind writhed in agony about them. But that condition is temporary and the time of complete loss passes; for nature, having designed that man shall seek happiness, will help him begin to gather again something of what he has lost. Nature abhors a vacuum in happiness as well as in anything else.

So, in general, and at almost all times, we possess a certain amount of happiness—the “happiness we already have.” I once heard this denied by a great authority: “Our happiness is only our unconsciousness of troubles that we really have.” It was Mark Twain who spoke, and I had the greatest respect for everything he said, but found this whimsical, since it is quite as true (and more profitable) to say, “Our unhappiness is only our unconsciousness of blessings that we really have.” So long as we can lose any happiness we possess some; and it is the truth that most people possess more than they realize, for we know how pathetically often *loss* reveals what a great quantity has been possessed, but not realized.

We all of us count over our worldly goods now and then. Even a child will do that, taking a sort of invoice of his toys, and as we grow older and more accumulative we continue the habit; but we do not often take stock of our happiness itself, and when we do we are likely to do it pessimistically, and without a proper sense of proportion. This is in great part because of our strange disposition to concentrate our attention upon even a temporary worry or annoyance, thus giving it disproportionate importance and making it acute—and there are few times in our lives when we are not beset by at least one annoyance.

It is mainly by our habit of putting inevitable but relatively unimportant annoyances in the forefront of our lives that we mar and obscure the happiness we already possess—what Dr. Samuel Johnson called our “comparative happiness”; and in this we are like a painter who might paint pretty good pictures, but in every one of them gets a small blemish into the foreground, where it becomes so conspicuous that the whole painting is valueless. If a painter did such a thing deliberately, we should not think him rational; yet it is what many of us do with our own paintings. We do it though we know we do it and have been preached at about it a thousand times.

Our mistake is in stubbornly forgetting that we have a choice in the matter; in stubbornly forgetting that we need not keep in the background the happiness we already have. With absurd but determined obstinacy we imprison it behind our annoyances and our worries—worries, usually,



that spring from fear; and in regard to these fear-worries of ours, almost any habitually worrying person may astonish himself by a little mathematics. If such a person will take notes of his worries for a year, or perhaps for no more than a month, setting them all down on paper faithfully, and if he will then review them arithmetically, he may discover something surprising about happiness, and also possibly about himself.

In his review he should place in one column all his worries that have proved to be unwarranted, or founded entirely upon pessimistic imaginings; in the other he should set down the worries that have had good cause, the anxieties justified by disastrous facts. A worrying mother who once did this found at the end of a month that she had items in only one column; and she declined to proceed further with her notes. She said it was an idiotic thing to be doing, and anyhow she *might* have been right about any or all of the worries that had merely happened to be unfounded. Likewise, a fretful business man who made similar lists, and at the end of nine weeks found that his justified worries came to nineteen and his unjustified ones to four hundred and thirty-seven, refused to continue the system: he said it was "too mortifying."

But although neither of these people gave mathematics a fair trial, as a cure for obscuring their "comparative happiness" behind mere gloomy imaginings, both of them were observed to be of a cheerfuller and more sanguine outlook on life ever afterward. "Actual statistics" have their uses sometimes.

One afternoon not long ago, I heard two old men talking of what they would do if they could "go back" and live over their active lives with the advantage of the wisdom that experience and age had given them. One of them said, "If I could be young again, and live my life with what I know now in my head, I wouldn't bother so much about trying to get down to the office before anybody else, the way I used to. I never took a holiday till I was past forty-five. All I knew or thought about was my business. If I had it to do over, I'd take more leisure; I'd take time to look around me and enjoy myself as I went along."

"Yes," the second said. "But that's just what I did, and it hasn't turned

out very well. I thought there'd be plenty of time for business by-and-by; I frittered the best of my youth and younger middle years away just looking about and having a fairly good time, and that's the reason I'm spending my old age in harness, still having to try to earn a living. I wish I'd worried a little more about that in the days when I was young and husky!"

"You do, do you?" the other inquired. "Well, that's just what I wouldn't do."

"You wouldn't try to put by something for your old age?" his friend asked, surprised. "You wouldn't be industrious in your youth so that now—"

"I didn't say that," the other interrupted. "I didn't say I wouldn't do it; I said I wouldn't worry about it. I've been looking back over my life pretty thoroughly, as we're likely to do in these days when our legs and eyes fail us and, unless somebody talks to us, or reads to us, or takes us for a drive maybe, we can only drowse or rummage up old pictures out of our memories. Well, I see that I was an idiot to be a worrying man."

"You think so? But that's just what made you succeed. It's what built up the fortune you're enjoying now."

"No, my worrying didn't do that; my energy did it—my energy and my carefulness; and, as I say, I made a mistake to devote all my attention to business. But my much greater mistake was in worrying. If I had my life to live over, I wouldn't worry about anything at all."

### OLIVER GOLDSMITH, 1728-74

British poet, novelist and dramatist. David Garrick, the actor, declared that Goldsmith "wrote like an angel." His chief novel was *Vicar of Wakefield*, his most important play, *She Stoops to Conquer*.

WHEN I REFLECT on the unambitious retirement in which I passed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling some pain

in thinking that those happy days are never to return. In that retreat all nature seemed capable of affording pleasure; I then made no refinements on happiness, but could be pleased with the most awkward efforts of rustic mirth; thought cross purposes the highest stretch of human wit, and questions and commands the most rational amusement for spending the evening. Happy could so charming an illusion still continue. I find age and knowledge only contribute to sour our dispositions. My present enjoyments may be more refined, but they are infinitely less pleasing. The pleasure Garrick gives can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag, who imitated a Quaker's sermon. The music of Mattei is dissonance to what I felt when our old dairymaid sung me into tears with Johnny Armstrong's "Last Good Night," or "The Cruelty of Barbara Allan."

Writers of every age have endeavoured to show that pleasure is in us, and not in the objects offered for our amusement. If the soul be happily disposed, everything becomes a subject of entertainment and distress will almost want a name. Every occurrence passes in review like the figures of a procession: some may be awkward, others ill dressed; but none but a fool is for this enraged with the master of the ceremonies.

I remember to have once seen a slave in a fortification in Flanders, who appeared no way touched with his situation. He was maimed, deformed, and chained; obliged to toil from the appearance of day till nightfall, and condemned to this for life; yet, with all these circumstances of apparent wretchedness, he sung, would have danced, but that he wanted a leg, and appeared the merriest, happiest man of all the garrison. What a practical philosopher was here! A happy constitution supplied philosophy, and though seemingly destitute of wisdom, he was really wise. No reading or study had contributed to disenchant the fairyland around him. Everything furnished him with an opportunity of mirth; and though some thought him from his insensibility a fool, he was such an idiot as philosophers might wish in vain to imitate.

They who, like him, can place themselves on that side of the world in which everything appears in a ridiculous or pleasing light, will find something in every occurrence to excite their good humour. The most calamitous events, either to themselves or others, can bring no new

affliction; the whole world is to them a theatre, on which comedies only are acted. All the bustle of heroism or the rants of ambition serve only to heighten the absurdity of the scene, and make the humour more poignant. They feel, in short, as little anguish at their own distress, or the complaints of others, as the undertaker, though dressed in black, feels sorrow at a funeral.

Of all the men I ever read of, the famous Cardinal de Retz possessed this happiness of temper in the highest degree. As he was a man of gallantry, and despised all that wore the pedantic appearance of philosophy, wherever pleasure was to be sold, he was generally foremost to raise the auction. Being an universal admirer of the fair sex, when he found one lady cruel, he generally fell in love with another, from whom he expected a more favourable reception; if she too rejected his addresses, he never thought of retiring into deserts, or pining in hopeless distress. He persuaded himself, that instead of loving the lady, he only fancied he had loved her, and so all was well again. When Fortune wore her angriest look, when he at last fell into the power of his most deadly enemy, Cardinal Mazarine, and was confined a close prisoner in the Castle of Valenciennes, he never attempted to support his distress by wisdom or philosophy, for he pretended to neither. He laughed at himself and his persecutor, and seemed infinitely pleased at his new situation. In this mansion of distress, though secluded from his friends, though denied all the amusements and even the conveniences of life, teased every hour by the impertinence of wretches who were employed to guard him, he still retained his good humour, laughed at all their little spite, and carried the jest so far as to be revenged, by writing the life of his jailer.

All that the wisdom of the proud can teach is to be stubborn or sullen under misfortunes. The Cardinal's example will instruct us to be merry in circumstances of the highest affliction. It matters not whether our good humour be construed by others into insensibility, or even idiotism; it is happiness to ourselves, and none but a fool would measure his satisfaction by what the world thinks of it.

Dick Wildgoose was one of the happiest silly fellows I ever knew. He was of the number of those good-natured creatures that are said to

do no harm to any but themselves. Whenever Dick fell into any misery, he usually called it seeing life. If his head was broke by a chairman, or his pocket picked by a sharper, he comforted himself by imitating the Hibernian dialect of the one, or the more fashionable cant of the other. Nothing came amiss to Dick. His inattention to money matters had incensed his father to such a degree, that all the intercession of friends in his favour was fruitless. The old gentleman was on his deathbed. The whole family, and Dick among the number, gathered round him. "I leave my second son Andrew," said the expiring miser, "my whole estate, and desire him to be frugal." Andrew, in a sorrowful tone, as is usual on these occasions, "prayed Heaven to prolong his life and health to enjoy it himself." "I recommend Simon, my third son, to the care of his elder brother, and leave him beside four thousand pounds." "Ah! father," cried Simon (in great affliction to be sure), "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself." At last, turning to poor Dick; "as for you, you have always been a sad dog, you'll never come to good, you'll never be rich, I'll leave you a shilling to buy a halter." "Ah! father," cries Dick without any emotion, "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself!" This was all the trouble the loss of fortune gave this thoughtless imprudent creature. However, the tenderness of an uncle recompensed the neglect of a father; and Dick is not only excessively good-humoured, but competently rich.

The world, in short, may cry out at a bankrupt who appears at a ball; at an author who laughs at the public which pronounces him a dunce; at a general who smiles at the reproach of the vulgar, or the lady who keeps her good humour in spite of scandal; but such is the wisest behaviour they can possibly assume; it is certainly a better way to oppose calamity by dissipation, than to take up the arms of reason or resolution to oppose it: by the first method we forget our miseries, by the last we only conceal them from others; by struggling with misfortunes we are sure to receive some wounds in the conflict. The only method to come off victorious is by running away.

## WILL DURANT, 1885-

American author and educator, whose best-known work, *The Story of Philosophy*, became an immediate best seller

MANY YEARS HAVE I sought happiness. I found it first, perhaps, in the warmth of my mother's breast, and in the fond caress of her hands, and in the tenderness that shone in her eyes. I found it again in play; for even in the pain of defeat I knew the natural ecstasy of boyhood's games. I found it in first love; it came to me when a simple girl laid her hand upon my arm, and her braided hair, sweet with the fragrance of health, came so close to my lips that I kissed it without her knowing. And then she went from me, and happiness strayed away.

For I sought it next in remaking the lives of other men. I went forth to reform the world. I denounced the ways of mankind, and bemoaned the backwardness of my time, and talked only of glories that were past, or were to come. I wanted many laws to make life easier for me, and for youth. But the world would not listen, and I grew bitter. I gathered anecdotes of human stupidity, and heralded the absurdities and injustices of men. One day, an enemy said, "You have in yourself all the faults which you scorn in others; you, too, are capable of selfishness and greed; and the world is what it is because men are what you are."

I considered it in solitude, and found that it was true. Then it came to me that reform should begin at home; and since that day I have not had time to remake the world.

Many years I lost happiness. I sought it in knowledge, and found disillusionment. I sought it in writing, and found a weariness of the flesh. I sought it in travel, and my feet tired on the way. I sought it in wealth, and I found discord and worryment.

And then one day, at a little station out on a wooded cliff near the sea, I saw a woman waiting in a tiny car, with a child asleep in her arms.

"If You Ask Me" by Dr. Will Durant. Reprinted by permission of the author.

A man alighted from a train, walked to her quickly, embraced her, and kissed the child gently, careful lest he should awaken it. They drove off together to some modest home among the fields; and it seemed to me that happiness was with them.

To-day I have neglected my writing. The voice of a little girl calling to me, "Come out and play," drew me from my papers and my books. Was it not the final purpose of my toil that I should be free to frolic with her, and spend unharassed hours with the one who had given her to me? And so we walked and ran and laughed together, and fell in the tall grass, and hid among the trees; and I was young again.

Now it is evening; while I write, I hear the child's breathing as she sleeps in her cozy bed. And I know that I have found what I sought. I perceived that if I will do as well as I can the tasks for which life has made me, I shall find fulfillment, and a quiet lane of happiness for many years. Gladly I surrender myself to nature's imperative of love and parentage, trusting to her ancient wisdom, and knowing that, as Dante learned when he entered Paradise, "*La sua volontate è nostra pace*—in her will and service is our peace."

### EMIL LUDWIG, 1881-

German biographer, widely known for his studies of *Bismarck* and *Napoleon*

*With surging endeavor  
Each thing seeks its complement.  
Feeling and seeing  
Toward a boundless life are bent.  
If these hold fast  
As we are onward swirled,  
Allah may rest:  
We ourselves create the world.*

—Goethe.

From *Of Life and Love* by Emil Ludwig. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher. Copyright 1945, The Philosophical Library.

IT IS A PITY that the science of happiness belongs to the philosopher; the man of the world and the poet know much better things about it. Most of all, that it cannot be taught. Although people want to become, not wise, but happy, they like once in a while to follow the thinker into the sphere of thought. But when the talk turns around happiness, then they notice that this man with the high forehead is not competent. They find out that the philosopher has constructed out of his own situation a resignation, which, be it bright or gloomy, in any event has its cause in his own being and his own circumstances, though he raise it now as a dogma for all.

Even Epicurus, who had the most profound thoughts about happiness, cannot do better than to recommend calmness, personally dear to him, as the recipe for all; but he overlooks the main point, that is to say, the differences in human character. He teaches moderation in enjoyment, contempt of ambition, turning from egoistic to spiritual things. And Socrates, who taught similar thoughts but started from virtue, was clever enough to declare virtue the sole way to personal happiness. All these ways to happiness look like the admonishment of a father who wants to prevent accidents to his children, hence forbids them to ski. But they love to ski.

Now that we agree one cannot teach happiness, considerations concerning it may lead to lightening the burden of virtue.

The differences in character are the cause of the emotion of happiness. You may sum up large groups by the colors of their temperament, others by their passions or prejudices, but there will be no repetition of the more delicate aspects and never of the finest. Because these are moods; nobody can scale them. Happiness always represents an aggregate of the soul. Therefore no virtue, nor form of life can be named, as bringing happiness to everyone. Whoever finds in himself the fewest internal impediments, and in the world the fewest external ones, to his leading his nature to its fulfilment, he is the happiest.

The story of Alexander and Diogenes teaches us that it always depends on the size not on the number. When the ruler of the world asked what



he might do for the philosopher in his barrel, and the latter answered, "Just don't block the sun," the wise beggar is by no means happier than the resplendent king. Both have but chosen the form of life suitable to them; and Diogenes would not have been more clever than his posterity, who applaud him in this scene, if he had despised Alexander, beautiful in his armor.

To be sure there may exist, in such a meeting of different natures, moments of envy. The business man, who travels through the world in his roadster and on his way passes a beautiful farmhouse with its high sunflowers, a sturdy woman shelling beans before its door, and two merry children playing in the garden, may be overcome by the desire to renounce his constant motion and settle down in an idyllic corner to find happiness. And when he takes his right hand from the steering wheel to seek the hand of his girl friend beside him, both may join in the desire to change their life with that of the people in the garden there. The farmer, who has just come home tired out from his fields, and has to hug the fence to dodge the car, will think: There they drive without a worry; that's what I should like for myself. But if these fleeting wishes were to come true, and their fates were exchanged, what a disaster!

Fairytales tell us the stories of princes and paupers, and how they were exchanged. Only that one gooseboy was sure enough of his own nature to resist those temptations and to answer, when asked what he would do if he were to become a shining knight: "O! then I'd guard the geese, riding horseback!" Only a few, like this boy, resist the temptations of the world; and if they do, it is usually because a warped will holds them back, so that later they regret it very much. And yet nothing is more harmful to the happy than repentance, because it always wants to undo what has already been done, and that, by its impossibility, drives one melancholy or insane.

In most cases the consciousness of virtue produces emotions of happiness, even when self-righteousness or other forms of cant are hidden beneath. That is why no one harms a man more than he who wishes to take away his life-illusions, and, like certain Russian poets or modern neurologists, excavate from the mines of the human heart the hidden

motives, instead of letting them rest in their earthly dark.

When two travelers cross a border, one hoping to smuggle through some Parisian perfume, a present for his wife, and the other following his principles and openly declaring all that he has bought, the first one is by no means happier after having got it through than the other after having paid the duty. If the first boasts, in the train compartment, about how cleverly he got away with it, the other will warm at the thought of his moral deed. In reality he just paid three francs for a comfortable mood. One wanted the elation of a cleverly handled trick; the other, that of straightforwardness; both of them are happy because they followed their instinct.

Or is by any chance the openhanded spender more happy than the miser? The man that before the arrival of his guests, lays out his box with the best cigars, which he seldom allows himself, receives the same satisfaction from this action, as the man that hides his good cigars and substitutes a cheaper grade.

How can anyone live this way? people may ask when they meet temperaments contrary to their own. What they wish to remark by this is: This man cannot possibly be happy. The pedant whose ties and shirts, writing pads and pencils, cigarettes and liquors have, through yearlong practice, been neatly arranged in orderly fashion will enter the room of a bohemian with a shocked sympathy, his eyes and nose insulted. He does not observe the secret code of disorder, nor the tender joy of the occupant in artistically cultivating the heaps of manuscripts, shaving utensils, biscuits, pictures, ashes: the enjoyment of a constant cultured leisure. And the one at the other pole cannot understand the happiness derived from perfect order, when he repays the visit and sees the pedant finding everything in a few seconds, reaching everything with a few grasps, and finally notices him set a vase neatly in its right place, when leaving it awry would have reconciled the guest just a little.

Or is perchance the misanthrope less happy than the openhearted? To be sure, he is shut out of the emotions of cheerful devotion, which he saw gleaming in the countenance of the expansive one when together they met an acquaintance. But later, he will enjoy the triumph of his

mistrust, which had warned him in the beginning to remain reserved and which thus guarded him from the disappointment that made the other one wise too late!

Would the happiness of either of them have been greater, if they had been admonished by a preacher, or by a proverb, not to extend too great confidence, or not to exercise too much caution?

If one of two lovers of animals by his love of free nature is led not to cage a bird, and the other one in his desire for companionship in life builds a birdhouse in his garden, both of them will be happy when they are standing before it: one, because a bluebird will sit on his hand and trustfully pick his food; the other, because he need not bear the responsibility for the creature's confinement.

It was morality that first dimmed these facts. We are taught to admire the martyrs, instead of to recognize that their passion lies precisely in their professions, their happiness in suffering for their ideals. When, in a rapture, he entered the arena of the ancient circus, in firm confidence that in a few moments he would meet his Redeemer in heaven, he was by no means more unhappy than the emperor who enjoyed the spectacle resting comfortably in his imperial easy chair after an opulent dinner, surrounded by gallant women and submissive men, and yet deprived of half his pleasure at the sight of this dying man by the martyr's unusual firmness before his death.

That is how contrast may subdue or intensify the feeling of happiness. The dramatic and the thinking life, defiance and surrender, Prometheus and Epimetheus: how often do they end their meetings each thanking his stars that he is not like the other!

Only weak natures, confused souls, will constantly desire transformations and exchanges instead of recognizing that we can never take part of the life of another man without losing our balance, and that means our happiness. Wine poured from its glass bottle into a metal bowl will lose its aroma.

Because none of the commodities of happiness is equally valuable to

everybody, love and glory, wealth and children, power and honor, some of these most common presents of life are by some depised. Even the three most precious commodities, health, beauty, liberty, are not equally desired by all. We have all seen suffering persons who do not want to be separated from their weakness. We have lived to see that others have destroyed beauty in passion, as when they have mutilated women or razed temples. And as for liberty, we have seen people returning to new dictators, slaves returning to their masters of their own will. The idol of happiness cannot be poured from a mold. Everyone must build his own anew.

Even the grades of happiness are not equal; as with its forms, so with its intensity; because happiness is capable of increase. Not only in the form of the enjoyment. The eager man will rise generally to higher enjoyment than the dullard. The heir, thinking only of what's being held for him, has less chance for happiness than the man that must go out and seek his fortune, at least in his youth. Whoever believes that zeal produces an unrest that scares away happiness does not see that the happiness of the zealous rests much more and certainly much longer on this very unrest than on its goal.

Are the feelings of happiness in a white hunter greater than those of the Negro who leads the way to the lion? Scarcely; for both know the ecstasy of listening, searching, hanging back. Both tremble in the thicket when the game can be heard at the expected point, both watch it startle, creep farther on until at length the releasing shot, the howl of the wounded animal, the noise of the jumping Negroes, bring on the bacchic frenzy. But during the banquet, the feeling of joy in the Negro will subside. That of the hunter, however, will increase, as he compares this with other hunts of which he has read, with the conquest of a cat-like woman; or as he fancies himself impressing his friend in London with the skin, his friend that still believes him but a weakling.

In such instances, that are still far away from passion, a feeling of happiness will arise even out of the hope of changing the accustomed

situation. People may be separated into those that look down to enjoy their relative happiness, and those that look upward to demand still greater things. Out of the will to increased possession of happiness of all kinds, especially non-material, arises such a strength that this will-power alone half guarantees success. As Epicurus says: You may find small joys, but real happiness must be earned.

Some persons attribute great happiness to the secret doings of the innocent man, the fool and the saint, the child and the idiot, a happiness heaven gave them without their effort. In such cases, the joy of the onlooker has been transposed into the heart of the ones beheld. We should ask instead: Is fortune really a virgin in her innocence, or she is a blooming woman who knows love?

No, she is not a virgin. Because knowledge or recognition, most of all the knowledge of death, in which I see the decisive difference between man and animal, sets the standard, and determines the feeling of happiness.

Non-transient goods are estimated by the few less highly than bestowed goods by the masses. If the homeric gods had not been so steadily concerned with love, ambition, jealousy, and most of all with the interesting fate of the mortals below, they would have been awfully bored on Olympus, just as the saints in Paradise. Most marriages demonstrate how dull man becomes by unlimited security of possession. Only those will conserve their happiness that are stirred always by the challenge of a never totally disappearing sense of insecurity.

Only the consciousness of death, which unites the savage and the philosopher and separates both from the cleverest elephant, raises our happiness from a dull perception of well-being to those great emotions that connect us at the same time with supernatural forces. Nobody experiences happy moments without feeling an indebtedness to an invisible force and if in full defiance he would repudiate that force, he but attests the more his mystical excitement. Only if we have recognized the fleeting nature of happiness are we mature enough for its full enjoyment.

A cat lying on a cushion in the sun; a butterfly hovering about a tulip; a bee sucking deep in the calyx of a lily; a boy merrily throwing his ball to the sky; a humming girl, walking through the meadow, swinging her summer hat on a ribbon over her arm: these all are pictures of innocent happiness.

We cannot question the animals, but we meet the boy and the girl again, after twenty years, and we tell them how they looked with the ball, with the hat. They will smile as one who awakens and is told what he has spoken during the night, in feverish dreams. But if we ask them about their happy moments, they will describe scenes of their later life.

That is because consciousness grows, out of the half shadows of youth, to steadily increased brightness. Knowledge and zeal, comparison and reflection, and always the shy or manly glance toward man's unsurmountable departure: these build in us the general emotion of happiness, in which we plant the single moments as in a garden. There, when a flower withers, its last fragrance unites with a new one until gradually out of old and new plants a landscape arises. When we discern these odors in the garden of our happiness, then we stand up to our fate.

For this, we need to recognize our own nature. At the lowest level, the primitive knows as much about it as the psychologist. At the higher level, man learns to know his own mechanism, registers his own reactions, knows what to expect from himself. Just as he has noticed by experience what tastes good to his tongue, or what harms his stomach, he learns to look for excitement or to avoid it. Out of this knowledge of his character, his passions, his impulses, his taste and repugnance, but especially out of his weaknesses, everyone constructs his own system of happiness. As Goethe said: "We are not happy in our virtues, but in our faults and weaknesses. Whoever believes he can achieve happiness through the fulfilment of a virtue deceives himself. It is vanity still within him that summons such a virtue. It must be understood in itself; but then the feeling of it no longer makes one happy."

This recognition is not reserved for old age alone. Youth, once awakened, analyzes itself at all levels and at all times. The use and the art of

soul-analysis were as mature in ancient times as they are today. In his later years, however, a man constructs his system more securely and just as he then knows, after abortive attempts, where he fits best, at the sea or at the mountains, in the city or in the country, in society or in retirement, just so will he be able, starting with the slightest actions, to fill his day with more harmonious moments.

What caution, what his waning powers change, is as when blossom falls for the fruit. Very few plants can bear both together. Such privileged persons I should like to call Orange Natures.

As only the awakened spirit shows man what fits his nature, this knowledge makes him able to reestablish the favorable constellation as often as possible. Even this is no trick of old age. Young people, in their first astonishment over the ecstasies of love, want nothing better than the daily eternal repetition; they tremble at any change, as they know only the one form of happiness. Nobody is more pedantic than the young lover.

Only with advanced education may the individual compare his life with that of his ancestors and thus recognize, in the repetition of certain facts, the increased transiency of his own situation. With increased maturity, each impulse of happiness will add a little further zest; correspondingly, the intensity of his feeling will increase his thankfulness for his fortune. Every happiness is a state between radiance and departure. And this consciousness of its transiency makes man more receptive to that which Nature proffers him unasked.

Thus he awakes in the morning with a feeling of happiness to find himself still in good health and in possession of all his powers. What his eyes and his hands grasp may mean on this day the forfeiture of happiness, a forfeit that at any moment can be exacted, in the form of his children, his willpower, his home. Thus he applies himself to his work with increased effort; he will use the strong arm of the artisan, the strong spirit of the artist, as long as fate grants these to him.

If the moralist calls all this virtue, we ourselves should like to call it just happiness, because that would be more worthy of mankind.

To strengthen this consciousness, all means are good, especially the most modern. Man, who gathers many pictures through his years and who may record scenes and voices through motion picture and phonograph, constructs memories of himself that widen his life to a legend, even if he do this only for himself, and it will perish with him. He is comparable to an artist that prepares constant sketches for a work of art that perhaps will never be completed.

Let the individual examine or defend himself in his diary from one day to another, let him cheat or tear the skin off his body, he will always manage to immortalize the present moments and to construct a sequel to them; whereas a regular Don Juan, or a commander in chief, merely stumbles from one haphazard to another. Napoleon, who seldom found time to meditate about himself, achieved such a survey only in exile.

There he talked about the *ballade* of his life. In such consciousness, the happy moments redouble. The tree grows rings and perseveres patiently; man may count his years.

Such a survey of his own conditions at once admonishes the individual to remember the season of his life, and bids him tend his garden properly. If he feels that the strength of Spring is vanishing, the memoried hold he has upon those happy hours will make him the more amenable to their departure.

He that thinks more and more skeptically about the transitory nature of the whole will but hold the more firmly to his happy times. Goethe, throughout his life, could not overcome his sense of their speeding by. He summoned the instants in his sixteenth year; he scolded them at the same time; and as an octogenarian he found but a loophole in the finale of *Faust*. When this greatest personality, fully opened to fate, daily gave himself the most exact account of his hours that we know in history, we see him constantly immortalize the moment, to add it finally onto a chain of years.

The bitter but sharp Schopenhauer defined happiness as the absence of feelings of non-joy. But probably life-happiness is something much more positive, that is to say, the sum total of happy moments or only the sum of the happiest moments, even if there were just a few.



He that has forgotten them is like a gambler that daily squanders his winnings. He that remembers them has accumulated wealth in the regions of the soul. Why should he not render account, at every day's end?

Let us imagine the moment before we go to sleep. A myriad persons live over again the pleasant pictures of the day that has come to its end.

The business man's wife thinks: The minister has talked to him for twenty minutes and invited him for tomorrow. Now his career is made. I am so happy!

The banker thinks: If I had cabled one hour later, when the New York Market was down, I'd have made \$3000 less.

The pupil thinks: Lucky that I noticed he was squinting toward me, and that I asked to be excused; otherwise I'd have been in a fine fix to-day!

The lover thinks: When I helped her into her coat, she leaned her left shoulder against my hand. Perhaps I shall dream some more.

The gardener thinks: Below freezing point! Thank God, we covered everything today!

The patient thinks: No spasm the whole afternoon; that's the first time since Wednesday. Maybe I am getting better now!

The old gentleman thinks: What a break, to get the last twenty bottles of Romanée! Who knows, maybe they won't import any more during the war.

The monk thinks: When I read the breviary the third time a butterfly settled down on the book. May God bless it. Amen.

The poet thinks: In the morning my head was clouded. Now that the moon is rising, everything comes much more easily. There is something of Athena in her profile. Really, what is happiness?

Passion is a form of increased happiness. Philosophers that warn against it may be compared with those gallant ladies that praise virtue once their powers wane. Man in his abundance, and not only the youth, may achieve

a great form of happiness without passion only if Nature has made him platonic.

What makes the sage warn against passion, the risk it involves, is precisely what produces the happiness of impassioned men. Happiness with reassurance can be achieved only on Olympus, where the gods could retire to their immortality after each failure. Even the cautious will enjoy his caution, but sometimes he will glance at bolder natures in his environment with that dolefulness which we may feel when, waiting at the goal in our fur coat, we look at the perfect ski jumper gliding between heaven and earth.

It is said that he that avoids passions has no need of repentance. But who has not once been caught by this deadly foe of happiness? And does it not catch the man without passion, as well as the one that has permitted himself everything? A man that, encompassed by children and worries, surprisingly saw a friend of his youth, an elegant bachelor, drop in between two trips, then after half an hour run down the stairs with light steps and wink at him from his waiting car, may then look with measured bitterness at his aging wife, who has just entered the rooms with some bills. But the other one, in his wonderful car down there, will reflect with similar resignation upon the picture, as after dinner the youngest child of his friend squeezed between the knees of its father and wheedled an apple out of him. "That's what you missed," both men will say. To be afraid of repentance is not a good reason for avoiding passions.

Here too, the force that brings happiness depends upon the alertness of the man. When the speculator has gathered all that, to his hasty nature, meant fortune and later has lost it all again, his memory will renew the picture of the splendid times. While, in his shabby hotel-room, the wall-paper is falling and the still damp bedclothes scarcely cover his faded pajamas, memory makes him once more the king of life, on whose blue-veined marble steps elegant ladies crowd for the reception and newspapers send their cameramen for pictures. Perhaps this contrast once more strengthens his spirits; he jumps out of bed and hopefully in anticipation enjoys the future.

The driving passions glitter in a shining procession, starting from the desire for money, to vanity, ambition, power; no one has described them better than Balzac.

Money is the most general goal, because this medium of exchange contains the fulfilment of all dreams, which may be made real through its powers. Or it is vanity, fed by the flattery of the parasite, the fear of the subordinate, repetition of one's name amid crowds, which increases the self-esteem before the world; but for fate too, which evidently smiles here at its favorite.

It is happiness in cities that attracts such natures; lonely islands would be their greatest enemy. When such a man cannot display to others what he owns, then it means nothing. That is why he is the antipode of the miser who glues paper to his windows, guards his stocks in an iron safe, and whose emotions of joy will increase at the end of the year, at the moment when he adds to the sum of his wealth another zero to the earlier zeros, in which oval forms he recognizes happiness.

The seeker of happiness in cities mirrors himself in an ecstatic life. He draws happiness out of the envy of his environing world. He even would press an oversmart garment on the quiet beauty of his mistress, as he owns her only in the jealousy of other men.

The greatest social passion, however, is lust for power. Strengthened by the motives of superiority and the creative will and at the same time mixed with vanity, ambition and a desire for vengeance, it basically invites all forms of happiness so far as this is to be had in the outside world.

One should not balance against the high surge of happiness in a dictator, his loneliness and friendlessness, because these are the price, not the voluntary conditions, of power.

If all happiness consists in the fuller development of one's own nature, the powerful man, who controls power not as an heirloom but as the result of his own fanatical quest, has achieved important satisfactions. Within him the quiet triumph over the last rival, together with the loud victory over the masses, has united with the joy of command and the joy

of rebuilding his world; finally, he can now exercise forceful vengeance against those who formerly haughtily crossed him. Surely, if he were to experience nothing more than the daily silent subordination of everybody under his command, that alone would mean the great confirmation of his self-esteem. He feels that providence has rewarded his potent will; when he compares himself with the subdued rival, he says to himself: *fata volentem ducunt*.

We know from contemporary and from ancient history, whether it refer to kings or to armorers, that powerful individuals reached their highest surge of passion in vengeance on their foes. When we balance against them the personality of Caesar, who never exercised vengeance, but forgot the names of his enemies, our full admiration flies to him. But that has nothing to do with their emotions of happiness, because in great souls such emotions rise as well from noble conduct, as else from vengeance cooled with murder or insult. How deeply, and how long, a despot who sees no one above him may enjoy this power, depends only on his ability not to grow dizzy on the heights.

All these hunters of fortune in the world of many stand opposed to those whose passions are directed inwardly: island-men, whose happiness is realized without society, mainly despite society.

The happiness of the Nature lover shines in a mild light, when in the calmness of his mind he inspects, with head tipped high, the structure of a pinetree, or with lowered head follows the weaving of the bracken roots in the underbrush, or when, with pricked ear, he hearkens to the evening call of the blackbird seeking out its young. This most silent of all passions increases to a quiet blessed happiness when, at home, evenings, with his dictionary near by, he tries to examine under the microscope (bought by hard labor out of his savings) the insects and parts of plants that he has brought home.

In some of these explorer souls, the desire for knowledge has increased to a sublime happiness to behold the works of Nature. In others, the exploring tendrils of self-seeking have transformed themselves into the

lust for glory. Such emotions are nourished by the experience, that truth finally will out, as with personalities discovered only by posterity. Then the glance of the old scientist under his spectacles goes to his grandchild, who is sighing over his first logarithm, but some day may see his name in shining glory, because his grandparent has set the reckoning of an invisible star.

But the urge toward knowledge is not the highest among the passions, as source of happiness. This is Eros, the prince without a country, on whom all turn their gaze as he passes by. His charm abides in this, that he alone derives his happiness not from taking, but from giving. It starts with friendship, which means, with confidence. This condition of happiness, founded on complete reception and response, not troubled, nor even shortened, by any afterthought, acts without limits and seems capable of being repeated infinitely; it produces an idyllic condition that only death can destroy. But when the ancients praised friendship as the purest form of Eros, it seems to us that here too a retreat from fundamentals has taken place, as Nature with overwhelming voice wants before all other things the love of the sexes. Some rail at Nature as sly and cunning, because love promotes its daemonic drive, its constant concern for new generations, through the illusion of great emotions. As if any condition of happiness could lose aught, be it only a blessed second, without leading to surprising consequences! That is why Nature forbids us the full perception of joy. The perfect image of union is not allowed to us, phantasies are substituted for the memory, and a tissue of emotions of surrender, dream, and comparison immortalize the vanished lust.

When Epicurus advises us to surrender to a desire only when, in a general survey of the situation, it seems that a surplus of joy can be derived, he precludes the deliberation of most men in our times, who live monogamously, though in apprehension. The danger that the aroused desire of man can bring to his health, commands him to sacrifice one fortune for another. A happiness shared by but two persons is torn in the conflict of daily life, is ravaged by society. Then, out of the planetary relations of two individuals, a social novel may spring.

The true novel, which lies in the counterplay of emotions, can arise only in youth, out of fulfilled love, because two young people want to possess each other in the most natural fashion. The longing of mature lovers returns to those earlier times; and the less he was then conscious of his happiness, the more beautiful he paints it now. This patina with which memory beautifies the basic pictures of our past life produces a new sense of happiness, comparable to that which is produced by renouncing. Both are dreams, one spun from what has happened, the other from what has not. The question as to what makes one the more happy in love, is no more intelligent than any generalization in the matter of happiness.

Because happiness is neither enjoyment, nor deprivation, but the liberty of the individual to choose that which best fits his nature.

Enjoyment? Why not passion? The distinction is clear. But still, though every passion strives to the fulfilment of its desire, this conception has moved into the lower sphere of the possession of happiness. We classify the sensual emotions beneath the super-sensual emotions.

The pride of the intellectuals, who figured out this scale, seldom conforms with their own practices. We may often see sages or moralists, who pride themselves on their cultivation of the super-sensual, conducting their debates at opulent dinner tables; we hear, amid their conceptions of immortality, saintliness and renunciation, their enchantment over the delicacy of a soufflé. What we know of the way of life of the philosophers in ancient times as well, from Empedocles to Seneca, is more frequently connected with the enjoyment of the senses, at banquets and feasts, than with asceticism.

Yet still today we encounter the prejudice that spiritual endeavor is not in concord with the desire of enjoyment. This makes the wise suspicious. The Romanic peoples are more honest in this respect than the Germanic, who with less naïveté are likely to shade their motives and veil the natural egoism of the individual or of the nation.

Who will set himself up, to decide where the borderline runs between spiritual and sensual enjoyment! There is no debate that the dinner table belongs to one side, music to the other. But what about wine, be-

tween the two? As it travels through the mouth into the stomach, it should be considered as belonging to the sensual enjoyments, which approach the thirst of animals. But insofar as its effects revive the spirits, and may act creatively or destructively, it is a spiritual enjoyment. On the journey from thirst to the enlightenment of drunkenness, wine leads from the primitive to the highest and back again to the primitive forms of happiness, and it demonstrates in a new example that nothing is purely spiritual or purely sensual, in itself. Some professor of history, who out of a hundred books about Cromwell fashions the hundred and first, so that he may be fed and pensioned by the State, is living a much more material life than a thoughtful sausage vendor, who on Sundays seeks an explanation of the nature of Christianity in the school-books of his well educated son.

The connoisseur of sensual enjoyments may often be called, by the intellectual, an artist of life, or a sybarite. The savor of a lover of joy clings even to the conception of an Epicurean. Yet it seems that everybody is hunting for the same joys, which but bear different names and masks. The housewife who keeps her seasonings in nicely ordered boxes or her odds and ends of cloth carefully rolled in a basket, gets as much enjoyment out of doing this as the court marshal gets, when he prepares the order of precedence for the next royal reception.

Not even delicacy will lead to greater enjoyment. A wealthy pastry-cook spends an evening with his family at a show. He has dinner, and drinks to his taste; he listens with half an ear to the band. Later he dances, drinks a few cocktails, argues with an acquaintance over the likelihood of war, and later in the night lies down in bed near his wife, who has similarly enjoyed the evening. And on the same evening, a physician has invited his lady friend. He has arranged a delicious repast, has exchanged tender words and yielding glances with the smartly dressed woman, while they both drank and smiled. Later he played for her "*Les Adieux*," her favorite sonata, while she lay in the half dark corner, on the couch. He sat down beside her, held her hand, and tried to read in her dreaming features the effect of the music. Outside on the terrace they looked through the telescope, tried to locate Jupiter, argued

about the moon. They drank to each other, an old Haut Brion, which they pretended they wanted to warm, as they held the fine old glass with interlocked fingers. Such an evening leads at length to emotions of desire, which will rise on in phantasies of dream.

Where, in this, is the borderline of the sensual? And what entitles us to expect a deeper sense of happiness in the second couple, just because their art of enjoyment is on a higher level? All four of them fulfilled their forms of happiness on this evening. Each attained the highest form allowed by their natures. Each would have felt funny in the role of the other.

Thus did Cleopatra, who commanded slaves instead of machines, pile up her pleasures on her trip with Caesar along the Nile; thus did the aging Lucullus, after decades of battles and campaigns, refine the joys of life. Thus did Friedrich von Hohenstauffen and Titian on the Mediterranean; Rubens in the North; Oscar Wilde in London. All their esthetic knowledge of art and love achieved higher forms of the happiest moments than others could experience, just as the delicacy of a Brussels lace tablecloth excels that of a peasant's handwoven linen cloth. And yet people feed their hunger at a princely table as well as in an Alpine valley kitchen; and between the stuffed quails and the *risotto* no new fates lie.

In all times and all climes everybody has tried nearly every day of his life to find a few moments of joyful quietude; then came a landslide, or a thunderstorm, or war. And men try to save themselves, because they love life. Only one in a hundred thousand is so desperate as to finish it with his own hands; the others turn off the path of tragedy. And when one comes home from a funeral, one is often filled with a silent sense of superiority, because it is not he that has been called away.

That is why people love tragedy in a show. Only a few recognize themselves there on the stage and leave the house with deeper thoughts about happiness. Most of them enjoy in aroused excitement the spectacle of the fighting hero, and feel themselves called upon still more strongly, after his death, to enjoy the little time still left for them.

Others who seem to be excluded from happiness throw themselves



into the lust of suffering. The legend of the farmer whose cross was taken from him by the good fairy, and who now out of longing for his cross grows more and more somber, is duplicated in thousands of persecuted, mistreated, dishonored souls, who stood up against their lot for a long time, in the consciousness of their innocence—and now, when they are suddenly rescued, find themselves helpless, alone. The paths of the prophets receive their light from this.

But not only weak natures demand misfortune from fate, so that they may be capable of happiness. The blind man, who the other day wrote his philosophy of misfortune as a prerequisite for true happiness, did not have this point of view when he still could see. We others may take the lesson thankfully, and not believe that misfortune produces deeper emotions than fulfilment. All that is figured out only for those moon-natures who are afraid of the sources of their own light.

When thus all passions, even those of misfortune, may be transformed into enjoyments, one still remains that ruins the happiness of man. That is envy.

Hate may become productive; some people blossom only beneath that passion. But envy, the only negative passion, will remain forever sterile. It, and jealousy its daughter, cannot be melted into feelings of happiness even by the most perfect artist of life. They undermine all bases of happiness and destroy their victims.

Besides the passions and the enjoyments, beyond ideals and even consciousness, there is a form of happiness that enriches man and replaces the ecstasies to which otherwise the passions are leading him. That is the joy of creation. The pastrycook, who spent his Sunday night so dully, so clumsily, enjoys another happiness when before his oven he prepares a special fancy cake of his own creation. There, he is all balance, free even of the thought as to whether it can be sold, because he made it without an order, and it will be stale tomorrow. There his devoted look turns to the flour, sugar, butter, cinnamon; he watches the scale: all

his senses are centered in his tongue, with which he tastes that the mixture is right. Then he too is a son of Prometheus, an artist.

Is there anybody equal to the creative man, in his calm and turbulence, among the knights of fortune? Pastrycook, physician, garage mechanic, amidst their seasonings, tissues, and screws, become little gods that put things together by a secret plan, known only to them. They unite the disjoined, surmount confusion, bring order into chaos. That happiness of the creative man, whether it work upon iron or flesh, is expressed in the glow that shines upon us from the face of the working man. In this mood everybody becomes beautiful, because all impulses and passions fall away; a spiritual devotion to any goal rids one of greed and ambition, which otherwise so readily set their mark upon the face. The youngest carpenter that hammers together a fence for the chicken-coop is then one with the old chemist that pores over a solution and, shaking it over the fire, watches the colors in the tube.

The feelings of happiness in working men are increased in the artist because he feels his creation, at the same time, as a symbol. No other creative spirit enjoys such enchantment, which comes over him anew each time, beyond all troubles and failures. The joy of the creative man that loses consciousness in the highest moments of inspiration, is here spread through hours and weeks of gradual increase and is brought to consciousness through the very excess of the anticipation, as a man wants to beget his son at once grown up and educated. The recklessness and liberty of the artist, his devotion to beauty, his uncontrolled mastery and his almost lawless phantasy, make him at the moments of his creative drive the master of the earth, whose feelings of happiness unite those of the dictator and the philosopher. As he desires nothing more than a useless beauty, his efforts bestow on him the highest joys.

How deeply must he experience, since he virtually never retires to rest on his money or his laurels, to a more comfortable life! This ever fresh inner impulse to widen his creative work cannot arise out of religious faith or ambition for glory. It is the consequence of feelings of happiness

that come near to the Olympian emotions; the presentiment of this in ancient times or among primitive tribes gave the artist the quality of a magician.

It is the act of creation, not the beholding of the creation, that rouses in all of them, from pastrycook to Rembrandt, these feelings of happiness. Bach, who for thirty years set down on paper most of what he improvised at the organ, was no more happy on that account than César Franck, who did not write down anything for thirty years, until his students persuaded him to do so. Balzac after one hundred and twenty novels, still aglow for new designs and visions and suddenly summoned from this smelt-oven of work, was even as happy as Shakespeare, who is the only great one voluntarily to have renounced the continuation of his work.

Their happiness lay in the joy of creation. If the heroes of ancient times wanted to emulate the gods and their deeds, the artists seek with their work a similar achievement. Man, through the reproduction of his own image seeks to escape full destruction, is thus the basic type of the artist, who tries to grasp through ever new images that immortality to which he is urged by the certainty of death. Once again the striving for happiness is decided by the premonition of death.

Hence spring the symbolic emotions of the artist, which transform every piece of work into an image of his life.

But he too does not live alone; he too steps out of the joys of solitude with his work, into the dangers of society. When he landed on the lonely island all by himself with his violin, the violinist was happy; he played for himself and, like another Francis, played his melodies for the animals. Why did he then become unrestful and long for an audience, look for the crowds that he used to enchant? Not even the painter and the poet can live alone forever with their muse. They are drawn to an echo, to a confirmation: therewith they throw themselves into a novel.

And still the artists remain the only ones who always creep back into their cell; the monks, to whom at certain hours they are alike, are poorer in their ecstasies only because they deceive themselves about their senses.

But the painter, who draws his beloved in a hundred different poses,

is really the richest and surely the most grateful student of happiness, as he bequeaths not only to himself, but also to posterity, the images of his happiest moments. Thus he widens his own fortune to that of all; and his self-esteem will rise higher than that of the dictator, when he compares the ephemerality of founding a State with the longevity of his works.

The strong man never occupies himself with sickness, but always with death. The weak man reverses this. The more deeply the individual has recognized the last necessity, the greater are his possibilities for happiness. That is why the daily diminishing distance from death increases the readiness for happiness, and it is an error to call youth happier. It seems so only in retrospect, because in those early days fresher powers, unembarrassed courage in the face of risks, simplified matters, shortened considerations. A woman of forty, who hesitates before an adventure, will regard her daughter, who risks all, with some jealousy. And yet the daughter, in her unsensitive giddiness, will forget the strangeness, and the entire episode, much more quickly. She resembles a thirsty person, who gulps a glass of champagne to turn back the sooner to her dance, while the elder one enjoys every drop of her wine.

As the forms of happiness change with the seasons, so does our relation to death. Youth's is close; suicide in passion occurs among younger people because the intensity of the pulse vibration is correspondent to its sudden stop. Then in middle age, which strives toward everything good, death steps back in the mind, and the blooming of children leads to the welcome illusion of immortality. Later death reappears the more strongly. The little word "more" takes on weight.

Here too, at the height of knowledge or wealth, of power or art, man will compare himself more conspicuously with others living around him or before him. Even the uncultured man of fifty, say the director of a bank, will ask himself then, which of the goods fortune bestowed on him men in their fifties generally have had. Such comparisons will trouble the proud character, because he is accustomed to looking upwards when

comparing, while the foolish will rejoice because he sees so many below his station.

It is only one step from here to a last will. This too is a medium for overcoming death, if only in that the will for a spell outlasts the end. Here happiness is forced out of the calm certainty of death, as feelings for and against certain people spread out in preference and vengeance. When the testator imagines the eyes of those from whom he withholds properties and money upon which they have counted, or the anger of his enemies, when he leaves behind memoirs that will openly, to the world, lay bare their weaknesses, then he still takes vengeance on fate, which deprived him of the light of day so much earlier than those others.

The thought of posthumous glory lies on a higher level. Men who loved glory have not been afraid of assassination, which could but snatch them at their peak and thus immortalize them. These forethoughts start with the rich man, who wants his name immortalized—sometimes purified too—by an endowment. Thence they soar, to the feeling of happiness of the inventor, whose name fills the world as a benefactor; its highest expression is to be found in that moment, of which the octogenarian Goethe wrote:

*The traces cannot, of my earthly being,  
In aeons perish.*

Those forms of the highest consciousness of existence before it is extinguished may be contrasted, at the other extreme, with the perfect naïveté of the ox, who takes his feed with pleasure on the way to the slaughterhouse. We often refer to him as happy and, in comparison with the criminal being led to the electric chair, he is doubtless the happier one. Beside them stands Socrates, who rose to full cheerfulness in his last hours; but he stands nearly alone. All others, even the most mature spirits, even Caesar, who discussed the question on the eve of his assassination, want sudden death. Thus at the end of life happiness takes anew those unconscious forms to which it was turned in infancy. The beginning and the end of life are enveloped in twilight, but the

great center throws its light into the wide world, or at least reflects the day.

When the ancients said that nobody could be deemed happy until he had died, they did not mean to give this an entirely negative application, for even the darkest conditions of life may be soothed by a favorable death. Surely a life without its last act is as little to be criticized as a drama; but no drama is to be understood in its finale alone. A botanist spent all his life seeking, by a certain method, to explain the origin of twining herbs and mosses. When in old age he had to recognize, through the discovery of another, that all he had taught was wrong, this end could belatedly embitter all the joy of his exploring. But when Caesar, Wallenstein, or Lincoln, was slain after his great success in life, he is to be adjudged happy, because he was standing on the heights. With regard to Caesar, the dagger of Brutus could indeed destroy in two moments the most powerful man of his time, but could not thus wipe out all the enchantments of this richly blessed life. That these had to go with their creator, that is the common human fate, not especially that of assassination.

Whoever leaves a dramatic performance takes home the last picture in his soul; the stage manager knows why there are such pains taken with the finale. But later, the spectator will recall the whole play. As after the death of a suffering woman the images of her blossoming days will become more and more distinct to a son or a friend, as the first tearful memory will brighten up, so will a happy life gradually restore its balance, even after a horrible end.

The ancients also said: "Whom the gods love, die young," of which proverb the legendary life of Alexander gives the most beautiful example. Only one who has met with considerable misfortune could have invented such a poor proverb; in fact, the form of blessing in Homer is always the wish for a painless death in old age. The desire for an early death springs from the spectator and is not concerned with the wish for happiness in the person involved. Not only will new and perhaps more extended conditions of happiness elude that person, often he will bear

a premonition of his early death in his looks; only we recognize this more seldom in life than afterwards in pictures. Death, even if it speak with the mild voice of Schubert to the girl, will always break upon youth with the violence of a thunderstorm on a day in Spring, while to old age it will come more expectedly, after a long clouding of the sphere and heavy storms.

The last thing that fate can do in favor of man is to veil the moment of his death. Therefore the crime that people in favor of capital punishment take upon themselves does not arise from their demanding an eye for an eye—a life for a life—but from the fixing of a date, which otherwise might be delayed for a long time—or else execute the verdict at once, as in war time. The knowledge of such a date—at least in a certain way—makes the physician a real magician and confers upon his will or even his mood, to give his patient the truth or a lie, a power unequal to anything else human.

While therefore the rulers of the earth may put away all others and not miss them, armorer, mentor, wife, they finally turn to their physician, with tension in their gaze, as to the great oracle of life.

He holds the scale of happiness in his hands, and even if art and science must fail too, he still seems to decide, like the Judge of the Universe, how much time is left for the man to enjoy the happiness of light.

Of light! With that we finally call to the outer air the great word of happiness.

For on that day we are led to the night of death in a most secret manner. Then the light goes down behind the mountains, behind the seas or the plains; the page we are writing, the features we are observing, the screw we are testing: action and reflection dim more and more, the contours dissolve. We grope for the small switch at our left and flood the room with a second, artificial light. But our ancestors in their caves experienced death when the old light died, and with its daily rebirth they knew once more the joy of life, with deeper feelings: that is why they bowed before the godhead of the Sun.

Perhaps no form of happiness can be compared with that of a man with a cataract in his eye, who after the removal of the dimmed lens, suddenly, after yearlong cloudiness, recognizes a human face, the face of the physician and savior who has presented him with light a second time. When he again sees the woods and the clouds, the features of his children, the rose in the garden, nothing else can permeate him with such bliss as he feels at that moment. Are not we seeing ones driven every morning, on opening our eyes and lifting the curtains, to hail the light anew and thus share in a deep happiness!

The change from day to night determines our happiness with the same elementary force as from summer and winter, as do the sexes, that complete one another. For in every one of these basic forces the deepest condition of our happiness has been given by the form of the change, as though they sought to advise us how to behave. It is the change from standing still to motion, which the elements perform for us. As far as we may perceive the thousands of forms and colors of happiness, one characteristic persists in all of them: what the Greeks used to call systole and diastole, the inhaling and exhaling, the change from action to stillness, from will to surrender, from work to drifting.

This law abides throughout all times and peoples. Even the most self-contained Buddhist, after having regarded his navel for hours and days, requires a motion of his body and his spirit. And the restless American needs these moments of rest, which even his diversions do not allow him. Only where tension and relaxation complement and release one another can happiness arise.

The condition that we all are striving for is the repetition of a beautiful experience, until it is immortalized, through renewed repetition. It is that condition alone by which character is formed; whereas a single, sudden experience, be it good or bad, can give only a sudden new direction. Because the condition of happiness impresses lines on the nature of man as life does on the features of his face. When we are touched by the moving look of a mother leading her children by the hand, across the meadow, happiness becomes evident there, even if it did not enter into the full consciousness of the three persons.



On a joyous day, which brightens up the will for action in artist and craftsman, in teacher and physician, through happier weeks and years as they course through the lives of two lovers or of a nature-loving soul, his state of happiness will make that person more mature and more beautiful than suffering ever could make him. Women achieve such a condition only in their love of a man and especially of their child; men, in their work and creation as well. Hence the depth of the feeling of happiness sounds as a long drawn organ note beneath the melodies of life, which would lose its hold if the sound were suddenly to stop; but only seldom, when the melodies above are stilled, does it reach the ear distinctly, and then men smile or cry.

But always rare moments will arise, out of the state of happiness, in which the whole will is concentrated; and if the artist accumulates such moments in his symbolic reflection of life, they will come, though more seldom, also to simple souls. Religion and society to this end invented weddings, christenings, funeral services; yet these are not the best moments. The best arise like rainbows on the horizon, unexpectedly, so that for seconds the heart stops beating, in the sudden sight of the symbolic bridge.

A young woman in February, still covered with a woollen scarf and heavy boots, goes through her leaf-brown garden, and while she pushes away with her stick some pebbles that are pressing upon the young green, she suddenly sees the first primrose, yellow, cold, half afraid, half wondering. At nightfall she sits by the window, smartly dressed, waiting for her lover. She listens for the good part of a quarter-hour before she hears the sound of the brakes of his car, well-known among all passing cars, the stop, the closing of the door—just as in more romantic times the hoof-beats of his horse. Perhaps, just before, she went to the bed of her child and held the two little hands in her own, so that they might say their prayers together, as otherwise it would not go to sleep. Three moments of perfect happiness, all gifts, have raised this day to the heights of the gods. What more could they possess, that might surpass such moments!

There is the surgeon. He saw the boy nearly bleed to death after the removal of the glands in his throat; but with three stitches he stopped

the stream at the critical moment; and now, the next morning, he sees the curve of fate going down and the curve of life going up above the bed, where only yesterday everything seemed to be approaching its end.

Or the collector. How he always felt the missing space in his gold coins of Augustus, where only a last small copper coin was missing! Now finally he has come upon it in the dark store of the dealer; he touches it with his fingers, and feels how he has closed the hole in his microcosm.

Do you see that greyhaired enthusiast standing near the Acropolis? Since his youth he dreamed of standing, just once, beside the Parthenon, rather, in the front hall at the south west pillar, the picture of which looked down at him from his wall in his college years. But he became a poor public school teacher; life was hard; he could not afford the trip—until now. Now he stands there; he is actually at the south west pillar, and the wind from Salamis blows through his loosened hair.

And among the fluent pictures of memory arises the blond, long-legged boy: how he comes back to his father's house, his steps uncertain in the dark as the lights of the hall blind his way, which on this first day of vacation leads him back to everything good, everything that he has missed so much in the niggardly school. Now through a side door he enters the kitchen, assures himself in one glance at the dog, which jumps at him, at the cat, which looks cautiously out of his corner, the cook, who dries her hands, the copper pots shining above, the electric range working below. All is his again; Homer and arithmetic have disappeared. Tomorrow at ten o'clock he will once more find the big breakfast that one cannot get anywhere else in the world.

Over there, the fisherman, with tight lips, peers through the break of the morning into the deep, which he yet cannot penetrate, with his left hand throwing his unending net and taking it in with his right. Will the catch pay today, at length? But then his grip tightens; his right hand, which senses something heavy, clamps more tightly into the meshes, as his left hesitates; now with all his force he pulls in, and there lies the giant fish on board, still flapping about, promising rich return.

In a bare room the sailor waits for the admiral. He was called to headquarters, because he aimed the torpedo that struck the enemy's

battleship right in the heart. All the period of restricted life, the waiting under water for days, the tension to hear what the observer at the periscope will tell, the sight, the preparation for the attack, the feeling between death and victory, the raid—and now the second when everything depends on the right aim: the dull explosion, the sight of the sinking enemy, the uncertainty as to the effect, more days under water, home port, news of the victory—and now the door opens, the admiral approaches, pins a medal on his uniform, and shakes hands with him just like a comrade.

To those that dream only at dawning belongs also the man who, awakened by the entering daylight, quickly closes his eyes to confide anew in his dream. He pulls back his comforting cover as it slips off, and he surrenders lustfully to what until now has filled him in a deep sleep. At this threshold between the happiness of a dream and the wakeful joy, he fastens upon certain imaginations, nourished by elements of his life yet reaching still farther out into phantasy: a sense of happiness of ineffable sweetness.

What is it that unites all these people, and with them hundreds of others that feel themselves happy? Well, look at them, and you will see it in their features:

They smile. The face of the woman by the primrose or at the window, the surgeon, the collector, the enthusiast, the boy on vacation, the sailor, the fisherman, the dreamer: not one of them laughs; they smile. The deepest joy of life is in that smile. The smiling one has wheedled something out of fate, in spite of rain, of storm, of pitfalls. All that breathes in the relaxed features, when a soul-state is concentrated into a moment.

That is the moment of perfect balance. For the smile on the face of a man is the harbinger of happiness.

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# Courage in Action

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HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, 1878-

American clergyman and writer on religious subjects

IT WAS SAID of Sir Walter Scott that he enjoyed more in twenty-four hours than most men do in a week. Such happiness may not be the only recommendation necessary to establish a man's character, but other things being equal, it should count heavily in his favor. Goodness which is not radiant has something the matter with it. Goodness which, however impeccable, makes life seem cramped, pinched, restrained and unhappy, is not real goodness. Such good people are often exasperating nuisances. One who has to deal with them understands the little girl's prayer: "O God, make all the bad people good—and make all the good people nice!"

That happiness is a test of character can be seen from the fact that no relationship in human life ever comes to its best until it flowers out into the sense of privilege. Even the relationship of teacher and pupil in a school is not fulfilled so long as the instructor by duress and discipline is forcing stolid children to their work. Only where intellectual curiosity is set on fire, where boys and girls with awakened minds are eager for their tasks, has the relationship come to its own. In home life also happiness clearly is a test. Often marriage sinks to burdensome obligation—no more. Two people, true to a legal arrangement, but not delighting in a joyous fellowship, laboriously keep vows which once they swore to.

There are other homes, however, where folk live together who would

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not be married to anybody else for all the world. If the Government should annul all marriage vows, it would make no difference to them. They are a family because they love to be. As for friendship, it is not enough to speak of that in terms of duty, obligation, responsibility. One must speak of that in terms of privilege. If friendship meant to anyone no more than duty to which he dragged himself with reluctant steps, we would pray to have him leave our circle. We wish none there save those in whom all sense of obligation is underlain and lifted as by a rising tide with the sense of privilege in being friends.

Happiness, therefore, is a real test of the fineness and success of our relationships. A man who has carried that inward victory so far that he is happy about life as a whole and has become what Browning called

A happy-tempered bringer of the best  
Out of the worst,

is rendering the world one of the greatest services possible to man. "We need not care," said Stevenson about happy people, "whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great theorem of the Liveableness of Life."

This test of happiness is plainly applicable to duty. Men can be roughly divided into three classes: Those who dislike duty and refuse to do it; those who dislike it and drag themselves to it with reluctant consent; those who do their duty and thoroughly enjoy it. Representatives of the last class are far too scarce. One of the saddest facts in human life is the general impression which has everywhere obtained that duty is grim, hard, forbidding, and that if one wishes to be happy he would better break away from it. "I know that this must be bad for me," said a young boy with a favorite dessert, "because it tastes so good."

Undoubtedly a large factor in making right living seem thus a dour affair has been our treatment of children in the home. The first impressions of childhood are almost ineradicable, and the first impression which

many a home makes upon a child is that duty is an unpleasant necessity. He feels driven to it by fear of ill consequence if he disobey. Desirable results in quiet and good order can be at once obtained by a swift and vehement appeal to such fear. "If you do not stop that," we burst out to a little child, "I will ——" And then follows the first threat that leaps into the irate parent's mind. The consequence is immediate: a shivering life draws in upon itself, constrained, repressed. No wonder that duty has uncomfortable associations in multitudes of minds! It is a commentary on parents everywhere that over two thousand years after Alexander the Great conquered India, Indian mothers are still telling their children that Iskander will get them if they do not obey.

Upon the other hand, to discover the petulant child's real need and to give a true satisfaction where a false one was being sought, to unfold the disobedient child into positive good will that drives ill will out, to get joyful expression instead of sullen repression—anyone can tell that this is the superior method by noting the faculties in himself which this requires. All that it takes to appeal to fear is indignation and vehemence, and they are cheap. But so to understand the child as to unfold his life into positive and radiant character takes the finest qualities that we possess—insight, sympathy, intelligence, tact and patience. Some parents bring up their children on thunder and lightning, but thunder and lightning never yet made anything grow. Rain and dew and sunshine cause growth—quiet, penetrating forces that develop life. And while thunder and lightning are occasionally useful to clear the air, it is amazing with how little of them a family can get along if only there is enough of the vitality that causes growth.

This does not mean that duty always is easy; it does not deny the self-sacrifice which right living involves. Everything worth while in the intellectual or moral life must be bought and paid for by giving up irreconcilable habits and indulgences. To be a good physician, a good lawyer, a good musician or a good Christian means self-denial. But there are too many folk who never get beyond that emphasis. Their goodness is always a burden to them. They are halfway good, wishing to indulge in evil, but not daring to, clinging to right living with reluctant

resolution, looking upon duty as an elephant might on his rider, sitting on his neck and pulling at his ears with an iron prong to make him go whither he would not.

If a man in any realm is to achieve distinction he must outgrow that halfway stage. On warm spring days a school-boy may miserably endeavor to break in his mind to the study of history. "The battle of Marathon," he reads, "was fought in 490 B.C."—and then across his imagination floats the vision of the brook where trout begin to rise. Alas, the burden of learning history! "The battle of Plataea," he continues, "settled the question whether Greek influence or Persian should be supreme in Europe"—and then a robin sings through the open window and issues invitations in the name of springtime that drive him almost to despair. Alas, the burden of studying history! Such a beginning for a student of history is not unnatural, but if ever that boy is to become a real historian—as well may be the case—little by little the consciousness of what is excluded by his study will grow dim. More and more the sense of privilege in knowing history will become warm. He will enter with delight into the thoughts and ambitions of generations gone and will rejoice to find in deeds long passed the spring of all that happens among us. If ever he is to be a real historian, the sense of privilege will be the sign of it.

If ever a man is to be a real anything, the sense of privilege will be the sign. A physician to whom doctoring is not a privilege is no real physician. A teacher to whom teaching is not a privilege is no real teacher. A friend to whom friendship is not a privilege is no real friend. When we think of real patriots we think of Nathan Hale, who wished that he had more lives to give for his country. When we think of real heroes we think of David Livingstone, who so loved his hazardous explorations that he thought he had never made a sacrifice in his life. When we think of a real Christian we think of a man like Paul, who even in a prison could thank God for counting him worthy to be in the ministry.

This conquest of duty, by which we not only do it, but enjoy doing it, counting the gains far greater than the losses, is an illustration of what the psychologists call selective attention. Some folk dwell upon the

positive gains in right living; others dwell upon the negative self-denials. What different pictures of a home exist in different people's minds! One person would say: A home is God's best gift, the place where love is purest and dearest and deepest, where life's shocks are cushioned by un-failing friendliness, where we are best known and yet best loved and trusted, where we can be ourselves without fearing to be misunderstood, and where the years deepen the tested loyalty of those whom we love better than ourselves. Ask another what a home is, and a very different answer would be given: A home is a place where we have to consider the wishes of others, where we cannot always have our own way, where children fall sick and require sacrificial care, where puzzling problems rise which it is hard to settle, where we must be true to love to keep it, where every day brings some small self-denial and every year some great one. The fact is that both these pictures are true, but anyone who appreciates a real home would be utterly impatient with the second. To be sure, a good home means self-denial, but, then, it is worth it. The gains immeasurably outweigh the sacrifices. It is not a burden to have a good home. No matter what it costs, it is one of life's highest privileges.

The only kind of goodness that does much good in the world is of this joyful sort. Many people have a depressing way of approaching duty. "Ought I?" they say. They drag themselves to it like Shakspeare's

whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school.

But there are others who come with another question, "May I?" They clear the air like a northwest wind, making it bracing and buoyant. Right living, as they see it, is an invitation extended, a privilege offered, a boon conferred. They are like Doctor Bushnell, concerning whom it was said that "even his dying was play to him." They alone commend goodness to the world, for most people choose goodness, if they choose it at all, for the same reason that Tolstoy became a Christian: "I saw around me people who, having this faith, derived from it an idea of life that gave them strength to live and strength to die in peace and in joy."



To be sure, this world is often a desperately difficult place to be happy in. During the Great War a group of American naval aviators were stationed on a barren island off the northwest coast of France where, amid lonely and desolate conditions, they carried on their hazardous scouting in the air. One day an officer, censoring the men's letters, ran upon this message from one man to his wife: "Please don't send me any more nagging letters. I can't stand it. You are three thousand miles away and it don't do no good. Do let me enjoy this war in peace." Life frequently presents grim situations where to enjoy war in peace is the only kind of happiness that we can expect.

For life is a queer mixture. Good fortune and ill befall us with bewildering variety. Most folk in the long run get their share of both. Happiness, therefore, does not depend primarily on the preponderance of fortunate over unfortunate circumstance, although no one would belittle that. Primarily happiness depends on a man's insight, on his capacity to find in any situation elements that make it worth while. It is fascinating to watch the inevitableness with which what a man is inside determines what he will find outside. The Bible, for example, has meant peace, comfort, illumination, moral power to multitudes, but because Whistler, the artist, was a bitter controversialist, writing and publishing scathing attacks on enemies and former friends, he came to the Bible with a jaundiced eye and found in it what he brought. "That splendid mine of invective"—such was his description of the Book! It is this capacity to find in life what you bring to it that causes a great deal of the world's unhappiness.

If anyone insists on discovering something to be unhappy over, there is nothing to prevent his finding it. Unfortunate elements exist in any man's life. The race's literature has loved to dwell upon these vulnerable spots which are to be found in the most highly gifted and fortunate of men. Achilles is dipped in the River Styx by his mother Thetis to make him invulnerable, but the heel by which she holds him is not wet. Siegfried bathes in the dragon's blood, but a lime leaf falls upon his back and leaves one unprotected spot. Balder's mother, in the Icelandic sagas, makes all Nature except the mistletoe swear not to harm her son, and by the mistletoe he falls. Every life has its weak spots, its lamentable ele-

ments, and if we insist on emphasizing them we can make miserable business out of living. Tyndall said that a bucket or two of water, whipped into a cloud, can obscure an Alpine peak. In practical experience, the heights of life are often hidden by just such a process.

Upon the other hand, there are few lives where a positive and appreciative attitude will not discover plenty of things to be happy over. A young British soldier during the war landed at Southampton with both his legs cut off close to the hips. Even the surgeon who greeted him winced. "That is hard luck," he said. "Oh, I don't know," said the soldier, "I thank my God that I have my health and strength yet!" The plain fact is that some of the happiest people we have ever known have been in difficult circumstances, handicapped within and hard bested without; but for all that, by the magic of selective attention, they were living radiant and victorious lives.

The kind of insight which discovers happiness in difficult situations, commonplace people and customary tasks is one of the surest tests of character, for it always involves generosity, appreciativeness, love. The one man who cannot know abiding happiness is the self-absorbed man. Dr. Charles R. Brown tells us of a trip up the Rhine from Cologne to Mainz. An American family boarded the boat and asked for some ice cream. Informed that there was none they became very unhappy. They had been used to ice cream on the Hudson day boats, and they saw no reason why they should not have it on the Rhine day boats. All day they grumbled.

The trip took them past Lorelei, and Drachenfels, Ehrenbreitstein and the mouth of the Moselle, but they missed most of the beauty—they wanted some ice cream. They were like Pompilia's father in Browning's poem, who

Shut his fool's eyes fast on the visible good  
And wealth for certain; opened them owl-wide  
On fortune's sole piece of forgetfulness.

For them it was not a happy day, for only the appreciative are happy and only the unselfish can be appreciative. Many people, at the end of a

longer journey than the Rhine trip, have missed the joy of it because they wanted something for themselves.

It is a great day in any man's life when he discerns that no situation is without its redeeming elements, no task without its interesting opportunities, no people without their picturesque aspects; that nothing in life is really commonplace; that commonplaceness in others is only lack of insight in ourselves.

The poem hangs on the berry bush,  
When comes the poet's eye;  
The street begins to masquerade,  
When Shakspeare passes by.

The Declaration of Independence joins in a single phrase "liberty" and "the pursuit of happiness," and, so doing, marries two ideas which belong together. Real happiness is indissolubly associated with freedom. Angelo Patri tells us that a little Sicilian lad landed a few years ago at the port of New York. The city was aflame with flags. It was the proudest day of that boy's life, because he thought the flags were flying to welcome him, who from far Sicily was coming to the land of promised freedom. Later he found himself in a public school in the Italian quarter of the city, having difficulty with the English tongue. But one day he brought to his teacher a piece of pottery which he had made, with a scene from his homeland molded on it. The teacher was a real educator. She wanted to bring out to free expression what was in her pupils. She rose like the sun in encouragement upon that boy's work. The boy began with a pottery class in the school; now, a young man of large promise studying at the Beaux Arts, he is looking forward to a promised period of residence in Rome. He says now that he knows the flags were not flying for him the day he came; he knows now that it was Lincoln's Birthday. But he thinks that in a sense they were flying for him, because America was giving to him the kind of welcome that Lincoln would have liked to have him get.

That boy is happy because he is being set free, is having liberated within him his latent possibilities and powers. Happiness is a test, not only of

one's power to find in duty a privilege and not a burden, to discern redeeming elements in untoward situations; it is a test also of the degree to which we are achieving an inward release of our own personalities. No cramped and smothered life is happy. People are happy as they become inwardly free.

All movements for human welfare can be interpreted in terms of this desired release of life from pinching handicaps into fulfillment and abundance. To lift the economic burdens which depress life and spoil opportunity, to liberate folk from the slavery of their diseases, to set men free by education from the Town of Stupidity, which, as Bunyan rightly says, is four degrees farther off from light than the City of Destruction itself—all these endeavors to give persons a chance to be their best selves are crusades for human emancipation and happiness. Nobody doubts the place of education or of economic betterment in this list of life's liberators, but there is one force which ought to be in this list which many people do not think of putting there—religion.

It never will be altogether well with us until we see that religion at its best is a great emancipator of personality, and until we get more religion at its best to function toward that end.

Strangely enough, many folk, so far from thinking of religion as a radiant, joyful, liberating force, class it in an opposite category. A typical conversation over a dinner table reached the conclusion that churches and ministers are necessary and should be supported for the common good, because so many people need restraints put upon their exuberant wickedness, and churches and ministers furnish these restraints. These convivial analysts of the religious life interpreted it, not in terms of liberation but in terms of suppression. Our schools and shops and factories are filled with youth who, if the suggestion came that they should be Christians, would never think of it as promising the unfolding of life into a new liberty, the expansion of life into its true fulfillment; it would mean to them a call to delimit and suppress themselves, to restrain and cramp life. They would feel as some of us used to feel when, gladly playing out-of-doors, we were summoned in to prayers because the minister had come to call.

Nevertheless, the men who best have known what Christian living is have always talked of it in terms of liberty. In view of this conflict between the misunderstanding of the mob and the testimony of the experts, we may justly make one claim: Christianity has a right to be judged in terms of its own noblest exhibitions and not in terms of its perversions and caricatures. It has here the same right which any essential aspect of man's life, like music, has.

Music to some people is one of the noblest and most liberating gifts of God to men; it takes spirits grown heavy amid things material and gives them wings to fly; it is Handel and Wagner and Chopin and Mozart and Grieg.

But to others music is ragtime ground from hand organs and music-hall ballads and the ribald songs of vaudeville; it is the catch-penny tunes of tired mechanical pianos, the calliope at the circus and the mouth organ of the newsboy at his stand. No intelligent man, however, accepts the latter description as adequate, for music has a right to be understood in terms of its noblest utterance. So, too, has religion. Much popular Christianity is not liberating and joyful; it is repressive, constraining, imprisoning to mind and spirit. But it is that because it is not really Christian.

One suspects that Jesus would understand better than we do some of our young people who run wild and fall on ruin like the prodigal.

Many of them are brought up to think that goodness means repression. All through their maturing youth they keep coming upon new powers, new passions, new ambitions, and they are told that these must be repressed. At first they docilely accept that negative idea. They try to be good by saying "No" to their surging life.

Then, some day, they grow so utterly weary of this tame, negative, repressive goodness that they can tolerate it no longer, and they start out to be free in wild self-indulgence, only to find it the road, not to freedom, but to slavery, with habits that bind them and diseases that curse them and blasted reputations that ruin them. Would not Jesus say to them some such thing as this: "You have made a bad mistake. Goodness is not mainly repression. It is finding your real self and then having

it set free. It is positively living for those things which alone are worth living for. It is expression; the effulgence of life into its full power and its abundant fruitage. I came that ye might have life, and that ye might have it abundantly."

That is real Christianity, as it is the spirit of Jesus.

Some Christians carry their religion on their backs. It is a packet of beliefs and practices which they must bear. At times it grows heavy and they would willingly lay it down, but that would mean a break with old traditions, so they shoulder it again. But real Christians do not carry their religion, their religion carries them. It is not weight; it is wings. It lifts them up, it sees them over hard places, it makes the universe seem friendly, life purposeful, hope real, sacrifice worth while. It sets them free from fear, futility, discouragement and sin—the great enslavers of men's souls. You can know a real Christian, when you see him, by his buoyancy.

## JOHN STUART MILL, 1806-73

English philosopher and economist

THE EXPERIENCES of this period had two very marked effects on my opinions and character. In the first place, they led me to adopt a theory of life, very unlike that on which I had before acted, and having much in common with what at that time I certainly had never heard of, the anti-self-consciousness theory of Carlyle. I never, indeed, wavered in the conviction that happiness is the test of all rules of conduct, and the end of life. But I now thought that this end was only to be attained by not making it the direct end. Those only are happy (I thought) who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even on some art or pursuit, followed not as a means, but as itself an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find happiness by the way. The enjoyments of life (such was now my theory) are sufficient to make it

a pleasant thing, when they are taken *en passant*, without being made a principal object. Once make them so, and they are immediately felt to be insufficient. They will not bear a scrutinizing examination. Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so. The only chance is to treat, not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life. Let your self-consciousness, your scrutiny, your self-interrogation, exhaust themselves on that; and if otherwise fortunately circumstanced you will inhale happiness with the air you breathe, without dwelling on it or thinking about it, without either forestalling it in imagination, or putting it to flight by fatal questioning. This theory now became the basis of my philosophy of life. And I still hold to it as the best theory for all those who have but a moderate degree of sensibility and of capacity for enjoyment, that is, for the great majority of mankind.

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE,  
1749-1832

German poet, dramatist, novelist and philosopher, one of the great personalities of literature

A MAN'S REAL help lies in himself. He must travel to look for his happiness: he must be quick to seize it, though the favor of the Gods may lead him and bless him. But it is useless to be slack and ask for happiness without conditions. If it did come, it would come as a punishment.

I can only take pleasure in a man who knows what he needs and what others need and strives to control his caprice. Everyone holds his happiness in his own hands, yet only as the artist holds the raw material which he means to mould. But it is with this as with every art: we are born only with the capacity for it: it must be learnt, worked out by unremitting toil.

Nothing exasperates me more than to see people tormenting each other, especially young people in the bloom of youth when they ought to be ready for every joy and yet ruin their short days of happiness by whining and nagging and only when too late realize that they have squandered what can never be replaced. The thought of it gnaws at me, and the other evening when we came back to the parsonage and over our bowls of milk began to discuss the joys and sorrows of this world, I could not resist seizing the opportunity and fulminating against bad temper. "We men," I declared, "are always complaining that our happy hours are so few and our sad hours so many, and yet it is we who are to blame. If we opened our hearts to enjoy the good that God offers us every day we should have strength enough to bear the evil in its turn when it does come."

### SAMUEL JOHNSON, 1709-84

English writer and lexicographer. The greatest literary dictator London ever had, Johnson fixed English taste throughout the reign of George III.

THE EVILS INSEPARABLY annexed to the present condition of man, are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeing a common enemy, who shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confess, that I have sometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretensions that are made to happiness, by the splendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably spent, when I have detected the imposture of counterfeit advantages, and found disquiet lurking under false appearances of gaiety and greatness.

It is asserted by a tragic poet, that *est miser nemo nisi comparatus*,



"no man is miserable, but as he is compared with others happier than himself": this position is not strictly and philosophically true. He might have said, with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miserable; for such is the state of this world, that we find it absolute misery, but happiness only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can possibly endure, though we never can obtain as much happiness as we might possibly enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewise, that many of our miseries are merely comparative: we are often made unhappy, not by the presence of any real evil, but by the absence of some fictitious good; of something which is not required by any real want of nature, which has not in itself any power of gratification, and which neither reason nor fancy would have prompted us to wish, did we not see it in the possession of others.

For a mind diseased with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be prescribed, but an impartial inquiry into the real worth of that which is so ardently desired. It is well known, how much the mind, as well as the eye, is deceived by distance; and perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined blessings it may be doubted, whether he that wants or possesses them has more reason to be satisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himself; and, therefore, it deserves to be considered, whether the want of that which can never be gained, may not easily be endured. It is true, that if we consider the triumph and delight with which most of those recount their ancestors, who have ancestors to recount, and the artifices by which some who have risen to unexpected fortune endeavor to insert themselves into an honorable stem, we shall be inclined to fancy that wisdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellences of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their descendants. Reason, indeed, will soon inform us, that our estimation of birth is arbitrary and capricious, and that dead ancestors can have no influence but upon imagination: let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another: whether he that owes nothing to forefathers, may not receive equal pleasure from the consciousness of owing all to himself; whether

he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honorable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than transmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewise escape the danger of being disgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world, has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a stake, and opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to lose.

There is another opinion concerning happiness, which approaches much more nearly to universality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reason be disputed. The pretensions to ancestral honors many of the sons of earth easily see to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantages of hereditary riches, and to consider those as the minions of fortune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whose estate is *res non parva labore sed relicta*; "the acquisition of another, not of themselves"; and whom a father's industry has dispensed from a laborious attention to arts or commerce, and left at liberty to dispose of life as fancy shall direct them.

If every man were wise and virtuous, capable to discern the best use of time, and resolute to practise it; it might be granted, I think, without hesitation, that total liberty would be a blessing; and that it would be desirable to be left at large to the exercise of religious and social duties, without the interruption of importunate avocations.

But since felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happiness to one man may be to another the cause of misery, we are to consider, what state is best adapted to human nature in its present degeneracy and frailty. And, surely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they should by some settled scheme of duties be rescued from the tyranny of caprice, that they should be driven on by necessity through the paths of life with their attention confined to a stated task, that they may be less at leisure to deviate into mischief at the call of folly.

When we observe the lives of those whom an ample inheritance has let loose to their own direction, what do we discover that can excite our envy? Their time seems not to pass with much applause from others, or satisfaction to themselves: many squander their exuberance of fortune in luxury and debauchery, and have no other use of money than

to inflame their passions, and riot in a wide range of licentiousness; others less criminal indeed, but surely not much to be praised, lie down to sleep, and rise up to trifle, are employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themselves of the day, chase pleasure through all the places of public resort, fly from London to Bath, and from Bath to London, without any other reason for changing place, but that they go in quest of company as idle and as vagrant as themselves, always endeavoring to raise some new desire that they may have something to pursue, to rekindle some hope which they know will be disappointed, changing one amusement for another which a few months will make equally insipid, or sinking into languor and disease for want of something to actuate their bodies or exhilarate their minds.

Whoever has frequented those places, where idlers assemble to escape from solitude, knows that this is generally the state of the wealthy; and from this state it is no great hardship to be debarred. No man can be happy in total idleness: he that should be condemned to lie torpid and motionless, "would fly for recreation," says South, "to the mines and the galleys"; and it is well, when nature or fortune find employment for those, who would not have known how to procure it for themselves.

He whose mind is engaged by the acquisition of improvement of a fortune, not only escapes the insipidity of indifference, and the tediousness of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to those, who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes, and seeing them gratified. He that labors in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues first supported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more distant invites him to a new pursuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wisest schemes are broken by unexpected accidents; the most constant perseverance sometimes toils through life without a recompense; but labor, though unsuccessful, is more eligible than idleness; he that prosecutes a lawful purpose by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reason; he is animated through the course of his en-

deavors by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be just: and is at last comforted in his disappointment, by the consciousness that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is most happy which affords us most opportunities of gaining our own esteem; and what can any man infer in his own favor from a condition to which, however prosperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vilest and weakest of the species would have obtained by the same right, had he happened to be the son of the same father.

To strive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the highest human felicity; the next is to strive, and deserve to conquer; but he whose life has passed without a contest, and who can boast neither success nor merit, can survey himself only as a useless filler of existence; and if he is content with his own character, must owe his satisfaction to insensibility.

Thus it appears that the satirist advised rightly, when he directed us to resign ourselves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to superior powers the determination of our lot:

*Permites ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid  
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit u'ile nostris:  
Carior est illis homo quam sibi.*

Intrust they fortune to the pow'rs above:  
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant  
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.  
In goodness as in greatness they excel:  
Ah! that we lov'd ourselves but half so well.—*Dryden*

What state of life admits most happiness, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repress the petulance of comparison, and silence the murmurs of discontent.

“Sir, that all who are happy, are equally happy, is not true. A peasant and a philosopher may be equally satisfied, but not equally happy. Happiness consists in the multiplicity of agreeable consciousness. A peasant has not capacity for having equal happiness with a philosopher.”

"That man is never happy for the present, is so true, that all his relief from unhappiness is only forgetting himself for a little while. Life is a progress from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment."

Solitude is dangerous to reason without being favorable to virtue, pleasures of some sort are necessary to the intellectual as to the corporeal health, and those who resist gaiety will be likely for the most part to fall a sacrifice to appetite, for the solicitations of sense are always at hand and a dram to a vacant and solitary person is a speedy and seducing relief. Remember the solitary mortal is certainly luxurious, probably superstitious, and possibly mad. The mind stagnates for want of employment, grows morbid, and is extinguished like a candle in foul air.

"A man so afflicted, Sir, must divert distressing thoughts and not combat with them."

Boswell. "May he not think them down, Sir?"

Johnson. "No, Sir, to attempt to think them down is madness. He should have a lamp constantly burning in his bed-chamber during the night, and if wakefully disturbed take a book and read and compose himself to rest. To have the management of his mind is a great art, and it may be obtained in a considerable degree by experience and habitual exercise."

Boswell. "Should he not provide amusement for himself? Would it not be right for instance, for him to take a course of chemistry?"

Johnson. "Let him take a course of chemistry or a course of rope-dancing or a course of anything to which he is inclined at the time. Let him contrive to have as many retreats for the mind as he can, as many things to which it can fly from itself."

When any fit of anxiety or gloominess or perversion of the mind lays hold upon you make it a rule not to publish it by complaints but exert

your whole care to hide it. By endeavoring to hide it you will drive it away. Be always busy.

There is nothing too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible.

### JOHN BURROUGHS, 1837-1921

American naturalist and author. His first book *Notes on Walt Whitman as Poet and Person* was the first to recognize the genius of the poet.

ABOUT THE PURSUIT of happiness, how often I say to myself, that considering life as a whole, the most one ought to expect is a kind of negative happiness, a neutral state, the absence of acute or positive unhappiness. Neutral tints make up the great background of nature, and why not of life? Neutral tints wear best in anything. We do not tire of them. How much even in the best books is of a negative or neutral character,—a background upon which the positive beauty is projected. A kind of tranquil, wholesome indifference, with now and then a dash of positive joy, is the best of the common lot. To be consciously and positively happy all the while,—how vain to expect it! We cannot walk through life on mountain peaks. Both laughter and tears we know, but a safe remove from both is the average felicity.

Another thought which often occurs to me is that we each have a certain capacity for happiness or unhappiness which is pretty constant. We are like lakes or ponds which have their level, and which as a

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rule are not permanently raised or lowered. As things go in this world, each of us has about all the happiness he has the capacity for. We cannot be permanently set up or cast down. A healthful nature, in the vicissitudes of experience, is not made permanently unhappy, nor, on the other hand, is its water level permanently raised. Deplete us and we fill up; flood us and we quickly run down. We think that if a certain event were to come to pass, if some rare good fortune should befall us, our stock of happiness would be permanently increased, but the chances are that it would not; after a time we should settle back to the old everyday level. We should get used to the new conditions, the new prosperity, and find life wearing essentially the same tints as before. Our pond is fed from hidden springs; happiness is from within, and outward circumstances have but little power over it. The poor man thinks how happy he would be with the possessions of his rich neighbor, but it is one of the commonplace sayings of the preacher that he would not be. Wealth would not change his nature. His wants, his longings, would still run on as before. It would be high water with him for a season, but it could not last.

I have been told that, as a rule, the millionaires are the unhappiest of men. Restless, suspicious, sated, ennuied, they are like a sick man who can find no position in which he can rest. Our real and necessary wants are so few and so easily met,—food, clothes, shelter! If a little money will bring us such comfort, what will not riches do? So we multiply our possessions many fold, hoping thereby to multiply our happiness. But it does not work, or works inversely. Do you suppose the millionaire's little girl has any more pleasure with her hundred-dollar doll than your washerwoman's child has with her rag baby? And what would not the millionaire himself give if he could eat his rich dinner with the relish the day laborer has in eating his!

The great depressor and destroyer of happiness is death; but from this blow, too, a healthful nature recovers. The broken and crushed plant rises again. The scar remains, but in the tissue beneath runs the same old blood.

It is undoubtedly true, however, that as time wears on, life becomes of a soberer hue. We are young but once, and need not wish to be

young more than once. There is the happiness of youth, there is the happiness of manhood, there is the happiness of old age,—each period wearing a hue peculiar to itself. One of the illusions of life, however, which it is hard to shake off, is the fancying we were happier in the past than we are in the present. The past has such power to hallow and heighten effects! In the distance the course we have traveled looks smooth and inviting. The present moment is always the lowest point in the circle; it is that part of the wheel which touches the ground. Those days in the past that so haunt our memory and that seem invested with a charm and a significance that is unknown to the present,—how shall we teach ourselves that it is all a trick of the imagination, the result of the medium through which they are seen, and that they, too, were once the present, and were as prosy and commonplace as the moment that now is?

It is equally a mistake to suppose we shall be happier to-morrow or next day than we are to-day. When the future comes it will then be the present, no longer a matter of imagination, but of actual experience. This prosy, care-burdened self will be there, and the rainbow tints will still be in the distance.

The man who is hampered and constrained by the circumstances of his life, thinks his happiness would be greatly augmented by a greater freedom, if he could go here or there, do this or that. But the chances are that such would not be the case. For instance, when I see a man going up and down the country looking for a place to settle, to build himself a home, and when I think of my own experience in that direction, I say, happy is that man whom circumstances take by the collar and set down without any choice on his part, in a particular place, and say to him, "There, abide there, and earn thy bread there." He is a free man then, paradoxical as it may seem,—free to make the most of his opportunities without regret. He is not the victim of his own whims or follies. He is not forever tormenting himself with the notion that he has made a mistake, that if he had gone here or there, he would have been happier. Now he accepts the inevitable and makes the most of it. He goes to work with the more heart because he has no choice. He wastes no time in regrets, he makes no comparisons that disturb him,



but devotes all his strength to getting all the satisfaction out of life that is possible.

If one were to make a choice of going on foot while other people had the privilege of wings, he would be haunted by the fear that he had made a mistake, and as he trudged along in the mire, doubtless would envy the people in the air above him; but if he had no choice in the matter and was compelled to go afoot through no fault of his, he would thank his stars that his fate was no worse. When choice comes in and we can elect this or that, then the door for regret, for unhappiness, is opened. We do not mourn because we were born in this place and not that, but if we had been consulted we might fancy some cause of regret.

Yet there is a condition or circumstance that has a greater bearing upon the happiness of life than any other. What is it? I have hardly hinted at it in the foregoing remarks. It is one of the simplest things in the world and within reach of all. If this secret were something I could put up at auction, what a throng of bidders I should have, and what high ones! Only the wise ones can guess what it is. Some might say it is health, or money, or friends, or this or that possession, but you may have all these things and not be happy. You may have fame and power, and not be happy. I maintain there is one thing more necessary to a happy life than any other, though health and money and friends and home are all important. That one thing is—what? The sick man will say health; the poor man, wealth; the ambitious man, power; the scholar, knowledge; the overworked man, rest.

Without the one thing I have in mind, none of these things would long help their possessors to be happy. We could not long be happy without food or drink or clothes or shelter, but we may have all these things to perfection and still want the prime condition of happiness. It is often said that a contented mind is the first condition of happiness, but what is the first condition of a contented mind? You will be disappointed when I tell you what this all-important thing is,—it is so common, so near at hand, and so many people have so much of it and yet are not happy. They have too much of it, or else the kind that is not best suited to them. What is the best thing for a stream? It is to keep mov-

ing. If it stops, it stagnates. So the best thing for a man is that which keeps the currents going,—the physical, the moral, and the intellectual currents. Hence the secret of happiness is—something to do; some congenial work. Take away the occupation of all men, and what a wretched world it would be! Half of it would commit suicide in less than ten days.

Few persons realize how much of their happiness, such as it is, is dependent upon their work, upon the fact that they are kept busy and not left to feed upon themselves. Happiness comes most to persons who seek her least, and think least about her. It is not an object to be sought; it is a state to be induced. It must follow and not lead. It must overtake you, and not you overtake it. How important is health to happiness, yet the best promoter of health is something to do.

Blessed is the man who has some congenial work, some occupation in which he can put his heart, and which affords a complete outlet to all the forces there are in him.

A man does not want much time to think about himself. Too much thought of the past and its shadows overwhelms; too much thought of the present dissipates; too much thought of the future unsettles. I find that if a horse stands too much in the stable, with too little work, he gets the crib-bite. Too little work makes a kind of windsucker of a man.

I recently had a letter from a friend who, from having rented his farm for a number of years, had had too much leisure. In this letter he writes how well and happy he has been during the season; he has enjoyed existence,—the gods have smiled upon him and he has found life worth living. Then he told me, not by way of explanation, but as a matter of news, that his head man had been disabled two months before, and the care of the farm had devolved upon himself; more than that, he was renovating a place he had recently bought, remodeling the house, shaping the grounds, etc. Then I knew why he had been so unusually well and happy. He had had something to do into which he could throw himself, and it had set all the currents of his being going again.

About the same time I had a letter from another farmer friend who told me how busy he was,—so many things pressing that there was

need of his going in two or more directions at once, not to get rich, but to make both ends meet. And yet he was so happy! (Therefore he was so happy, say I.) Troubles and trials, he says, are few and soon over with, while the pleasures are past all enumeration. "There is so much to be enjoyed, one never gets to the end of it."

This man was too busy to be unhappy; he had no time for ennui or the blues. You see he did not overindulge in the luxury of leisure. He was compelled to take it sparingly, hence it always tasted good to him. The fruit of the tree of life of which we must eat very sparingly is leisure. Too much of it, and it turns to gall on our tongue. A little too much of those things which we think will make us happy, and we are cloyed, and miserable indeed. The boy would like to dine entirely upon pie or sweetmeats, and we all need the lesson that the dessert of life is to be taken sparingly. Because money is good, do not, therefore, think that riches are an unmixed blessing; because leisure is sweet to you, do not, therefore, imagine you would be happy with nothing to do. My correspondent was too busy and too poor to be cloyed or sated, too much the victim of circumstances to be self-accusing and repining. He had no choice but to go on and make the most of things.

I overheard an old man and a young man talking at the station. The young man was telling of an old uncle of his who had sold his farm and retired to the village. He had enjoyed going to the village, so now he thought he would take his fill of it. But it soon cloyed upon him. He had nothing to do. Every night he would say with a sigh of relief, "Well, another day is through," and each morning wondered how he could endure the day.

In every village up and down the older parts of the country there are several such men; every day is a burden to them because they have nothing to do. They drift aimlessly up and down the street; they loiter in the post-office or lounge in the grocery store or hotel bar-room, —no comfort to themselves and no use to the world. With what longing they must look upon the farmers that drive to get a horse shod or to do a little trading and then drive briskly away! How the vision of the farm, the cattle, the sheep, the barn, the growing crops, the early morning, the sowing, the planting, the harvesting must haunt them! Nothing

to do! When they were driven and oppressed with work they had thought, What pleasure to be free from all this, to be at liberty to go and come as one likes, with no cows to milk or chores to do! Now they probably have not a hen or a dog to comfort them. These men do not live out more than half their latter days. Nature has no use for them, and they soon drop away; whereas their neighbors who stick to the farm and keep the currents going, reach a much more advanced period of life.

Rust and rot and mildew come to unused things. An empty and deserted house, how quickly it goes to decay! and an unoccupied man, how is his guard down on every side! When the will relaxes or is not stimulated, the physical powers relax also and their power to ward off disease is greatly lessened. Among men of all kinds who have retired from active life the mortality should be and doubtless is much greater than among men of the same age who stick to their lifelong occupations. Here is a farmer just died at eighty-eight who managed his farm till within a few months of his death; here is his neighbor, ten years younger, who retired to the village several years ago, now wandering about more than half demented.

Oh, the blessedness of work, of life-giving and life-sustaining work! The busy man is the happy man; the idle man is the unhappy. When you feel blue and empty and disconsolate, and life seems hardly worth living, go to work with your hands,—delve, hoe, chop, saw, churn, thrash, anything to quicken the pulse and dispel the fumes. The blue devils can be hoed under in less than half an hour; ennui cannot stand the bucksaw fifteen minutes; the whole outlook may be brightened in a brief time by turning your hands to something you can do with a will.

I speak from experience. A few years ago I found my life beginning to stagnate; I discovered that I was losing my interest in things. I was out of sorts both physically and mentally; sleep was poor, digestion was poor, and my days began to wear too sombre a tinge. There was no good reason for it that I could perceive except that I was not well and fully occupied. I had too much leisure.

What was to be done? Go to work. Get more land and become a farmer in earnest. Exchange the penholder for the crow-bar and the hoe-handle. I already had a few acres of land and had been a fruitgrower

in a small way; why should I not double my possessions and plant a vineyard that promised some returns? So I began to cast covetous eyes upon some land adjoining me that was for sale. I nibbled at it very shyly at first. I walked over it time after time and began to note its good points. Then I began to pace it off. I found pleasure and occupation even in this. Then I took a line and began to measure it. I measured off a pretty good slice and fancied it already my own. This tasted so good to me that I measured off a larger slice and then a still larger, till I found that nothing short of the whole field would satisfy me; I must go to the fence and take a clean strip one field broad from the road to the river.

This I did, thus doubling the nine acres I already possessed. It was winter; I could hardly wait till spring to commence operations upon the new purchase. Already I felt the tonic effect of those nine acres. They were a stimulus, an invitation, and a challenge. To subdue them and lick them into shape and plant them with choice grapes and currants and raspberries,—the mere thought of it toned me up and improved my sleep.

Before the snow was all off the ground in March we set to work underdraining the moist and springy places. My health and spirits improved daily. I seemed to be underdraining my own life and carrying off the stagnant water, as well as that of the land. Then a lot of ash stumps and brush, an old apple orchard, and a great many rocks and large stones were to be removed before the plough could be set going.

With what delight I saw this work go forward, and I bore my own part in it! I had not seen such electric April days for years; I had not sat down to dinner with such relish and satisfaction for the past decade; I had not seen the morning break with such anticipations since I was a boy. The clear, bright April days, the great river dimpling and shining there, the arriving birds, the robins laughing, the high-holes calling, the fox sparrows whistling, the blackbirds gurgling, and the hillside slope where we were at work,—what delight I had in it all, and what renewal of life it brought me! I found the best way to see the spring come was to be in the field at work. You are then in your proper place, and the genial influences steal in upon you and envelop you unawares. You glance up from your work, and the landscape is suddenly brimming with

beauty. There is more joy and meaning in the voices of the birds than you ever before noticed. You do not have time to exhaust the prospect or to become sated with nature, but feel her constantly as a stimulating presence. Out of the corners of your eyes and by a kind of indirection you see the subtle and renewing spirits of the season at work.

Before April was finished, the plough had done its perfect work, and and in early May the vines and plants were set. Then followed the care and cultivation of them during the summer, and the pruning and training of them the subsequent season, all of which has been a delight to me. Indeed the new vineyard has become almost a part of myself. I walk through it with the most intimate and personal regard for every vine. I know how they came there. I owe them a debt of gratitude. They have done more for me than a trip to Europe or to California could have done. If it brings me no other returns, the new lot already has proved one of the best investments I ever made in my life.

Oh, the blessedness of motion, of a spur to action, of a current in one's days, of something to stimulate the will, to help reach a decision, to carry down stream the waste and debris of one's life! Hardly a life anywhere so befouled or stagnant, but it would clear and renew itself, if the currents were set going by the proper kind and amount of honest work!

### WALTER B. PITKIN, 1878-

American psychologist and writer, author of  
*Life Begins at Forty*

EVERYBODY WOULD LIKE to live happily. But how few do! And how often wise men have tried to work out a simple formula that will teach you the trick!

Some of these formulas sound promising. "To be happy, simply be

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yourself!"—so runs one. "Be good, and you will be happy!"—runs another. A third proclaims: "Find your happiness in serving your fellow men." A fourth: "Hard work alone can bring true happiness." A fifth: "Have faith in the moral order of the world, and you will be happy." A sixth gets into good verse, thanks to Wotton:

How happy is he born and taught  
That serveth not another's will;  
Whose armor is his honest thought  
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Other advisers offer negative formulas. Says one: "Expect nothing and you will not be disappointed. Such happiness as man can hope for comes through renunciation." And the Buddhist goes so far as to recommend that you cease all striving for things that give pleasure and happiness, even the simplest. The Christian agrees with the Buddhist to the extent that he believes happiness is not to be expected in this world; but he differs from the Buddhist in looking forward to a heaven of delight wherein he will rest at ease forever and ever.

The curious fact about all of these formulas is that they have come from religionists, from philosophers, from literary folk, from common men, from almost everybody except from scientific observers. So far as I can ascertain, there had never been a Darwin of happiness, still less a Galileo or a Newton. The Descent of Man has been minutely investigated, but no well trained psychologist has ever bothered to gather facts about man's ascent to the realm of joy. The subject remains at the mercy of people who know nothing of the methods of precise records and analysis. This is why most formulas of happiness are some ego's cunning mask enlarged to the diameter of all humanity. Personal impressions are remodelled to conform to private wishes. And the result is called wisdom.

Why have scientists ignored happiness? Well, in the first place, they cannot experiment here. Most of us still enjoy our privacy. We are not attracted by the invitation to put ourselves under a microscope. A happy man does not wish to take a chance on being made less so by having some investigator tinker with him. And an unhappy one insists upon

being relieved of his woes, without the slightest regard for the wishes of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Behind these reluctances there lurks a still deeper passion for privacy that is part and parcel of the life processes itself. It is both painful and unbelievably hard to look at the inmost workings of the human machine, and the effect of self-inspection is often to throw the whole thing out of running order. It is not the psychoanalyst alone who is familiar with this normal resistance to introspective study and confession. Every physician and every psychologist knows it.

Some people are born happy, some achieve happiness, but nobody ever had happiness thrust upon him. It never comes as a compulsion from outside. It is always an inner light, heat and power. In this respect it differs utterly from fame, health, and wealth. A newspaper can force fame upon a man, and not all of his protestations can stay the diabolical process. A rich father can force wealth upon his children, through a cunningly contrived last will and testament. And odd as it may seem, the Board of Health can—and often does—force health upon many a stupid and dirty citizen who refuses to keep himself sanitary. But we have yet to hear of a case in which a man who is not happy and makes no effort to achieve happiness has the blessed state thrust upon him by act of Congress, Providence or other agency.

Why is this impossible? Simply because as Seneca said, "A happy life is one which is in accordance with its own nature." It is "a desirable condition of life," a way of behaving in which we have what we want, do what we want, and be what we want to be. Hence in some sense it is a life of self-realization and never a life whose moves and moods are dictated by friends or foes.

"To be happy, just be yourself."

This ancient advice has been peddled for more years than man can tell. It has survived because it is part of a great truth.

But such a tiny part! For when you try to apply the rule to your own way of life, you suddenly discover that, before you can be yourself, you must have a pretty clear idea as to what you are.



Do you know what you are?

Of course not. Neither does anybody else. And if you give the matter much thought, you quickly realize that the ancient advice is utterly useless, as it stands. Not false! Rather a truth whose service value depends absolutely upon your being able to discover all your important traits and their relative importance.

What does it mean to be yourself? Does it mean that you are to give free expression to every impulse? Surely that might well be. And yet, wouldn't that lead to a crazy state of society? Would anybody be happy if everybody went around doing just what he felt like doing at the moment? Suppose I were weary and wanted to sleep, but some gay dogs in the next room wanted to play saxophones and dance all night? Would I be very happy, just by being myself? And what if I felt moved to shoot these disturbers of my peace?

No, that easy adage about being oneself is like all other popular lines—useless, vague and inadequate.

You live in a world full of other people, some of whom you love, hate, meet daily, avoid cunningly, fight, admire, or marvel at. The chances are better than ninety-nine out of a hundred that you cannot live happily, or even contentedly, unless you get along pretty well with some of these contemporaries. It is not enough, then, to know your own nature. You ought to understand the natures of these others also. You cannot be yourself with much success unless you know how to adjust yourself to those many other selves.

A pretty thorough understanding of personalities is the foundation—not of everybody's happiness, but of most people's.

Every wish requires for its satisfying a certain bodily equipment and a certain fund of available energy. And if all the important cravings are thus supported, some kind of happiness is likely to ensue. If, on the other hand, even one important craving lacks either equipment or energy, a physical and mental unbalance results with unhappiness or at least a lack of happiness as the outcome.

Physical equipment includes the whole dynamic pattern of bones, muscles and nerves functioning together. There is one equipment for

winking the eye, another for throwing a stone, and another for executing an intricate experiment in colloidal chemistry. Let us call this factor pattern.

Sometimes more than this pattern is required for the fulfilling of wishes. To get what we want, we have to exert ourselves for hours, days, or even years. A boy whose heart is set upon winning the hundred-yard dash at the annual athletic meet of his high school will never succeed if he refrains from strenuous practice up to the hour of the meet, and then makes one tremendous effort on the track. The energy he must spend in practicing may exceed by a thousandfold the amount he actually uses in the contest. As in foot races, so everywhere else. Practice makes perfect. But we all too easily forget that practice involves interminable exertion. Furthermore, the energy for the given act must be available at precisely the right instant and in precisely the right sequence, as well as in adequate quantity. Its timing is an integral part of its flow, precisely as in the utilizing of electrical energy. A man who wishes to become a skillful tennis player will never succeed if he releases muscular energy through his arms one-tenth of a second more slowly than his opponents do. The lawyer who would win difficult suits in court will have a hard time of it if he thinks up and puts into effective language the right thoughts by way of defense or rebuttal five minutes after the critical moment in the proceedings has arrived. We all know people who have bright ideas just too late to use them in conversation or in argument. They have a good intellectual pattern and a rich fund of energy perhaps, but it is not available at the right place and time. Hence it is ineffective.

Our desires, therefore, must harmonize with our pattern and our available energies if we are to live happily. The babe who cries for the moon can never become happy as long as his wish persists, for his arm will never grow long enough to reach out and get the moon. Between this babe and the happy life we find tens of thousands of wishes that are constitutionally unrealizable. Next to this class we find a second one consisting of wishes which can be realized only with and through extraordinary patterns and available energies. They are realizable for perhaps one man in a million and no more. At any given time there can be

only one richest man in the United States. If, as a result of some perverted education you have been encouraged to aspire to become this man, you have one chance in 120,000,000 of making your dream real. If you crave to be the world's champion heavyweight prize fighter, you have about one chance in 800,000,000. (Assuming that you are not competing against women and children.)

There are two varieties of rare superior patterns. In one we find a single trait of unusual power and persistence dominating all the others effectively. In the second, there appear several superior traits linked in perfect teamwork, each one dominating only in situations where it best serves. Each variety is found with and without adequate energies. Hence the combinations and interplay of special trait patterns and energies are practically infinite.

A normal personality is continuously impelled by many urges. Only madmen crave one thing steadily. Of course, not all those psychic forces bubble up into consciousness at once, nor do they take possession of our muscles in mass. There motor effects are alternating. But the rate of alternation is exceedingly fast in many cases. In the course of one hour a man may be moved to do a hundred things representing deep trends in his nature. He may, for a brief second or two, twitch his fingers under the urge to play the piano; draw a deep breath to sing; strike out across the room as if to run a mile; declaim before an imaginary multitude; and flash a score of embryo thoughts all of which die stillborn.

Now, his eventual behavior is determined by this entire field of discharging energies. This is why happiness depends least of all upon any single trait and most of all upon the entire appetitive system in a man.

We are confronted therefore with two radically different questions. In the first place, how are all the important desires of a man related to one another? And secondly, how is the whole system of desires related to his pattern and his available energies? It is not enough to know, for example, that John Smith is moved by fourteen vigorous and deeply rooted wishes, one of which is to sing on the concert stage and another to get on well with all his neighbors. We must go further; we must discover which of the fourteen is strongest, which is most persistent, which can most readily be subordinated, and so on. What if his inter-

minable singing at home irritates his neighbors to the point of ending a dozen friendships? Or what if his fondness for his neighbors' society and admiration steals hours from his operatic practice? It is in the clash of such interests as these that we begin to see the true intricacy of personality and happiness. Here is the stuff of which great drama is made—and precisely because it is the stuff of which life itself is made.

Suppose we have analyzed and charted passably well a man's wish system. We must next ascertain how his physical and mental pattern is related to it as a whole. If John Smith happens to be almost equally driven by the romantic aspiration to explore the Arctic regions and by the less romantic one to build six-room bungalows by the hundred, has he the brawn, the resistance to cold, the temperament, and the mental equipment that will enable him to rough it on the frozen rim of the Poles? At the same time can he hold in check his architectural cravings without injuring his exploratory deeds?

Were we to undertake a complete analysis of the happiness or unhappiness of a given personality, our main tasks would be four. We should first have to discover every important trend in the man's nature, distinguishing as far as possible those which are native from those which are acquired. Next we should have to observe the dynamic relations among these trends, especially their relative strengths and frequencies of manifestation and their influences upon one another. This done, we should have to look at the physical and mental equipment of the man in order to ascertain its fitness in realizing the entire system of wishes. Finally we should scrutinize his available energies, measuring them against the entire system of wishes, jointly and severally.

Obviously such a complete investigation, even of an ordinary man, would require several years and fill a book much larger than this one. Unfortunately, too, it would involve analyses and tests to which few human beings would be willing to submit. I must therefore disappoint you if you hope to have spread out before you such an intimate panorama. The best that can be done here is to present in a wide variety of cases a few of the most conspicuous wishes and their interplay, together with a mere sketch of the pattern and energies available for their execution.

In these pioneer days of the psychology of personality, it seems much

more useful to report a multitude of cases incompletely than to report a few exhaustively. For nobody as yet knows enough about the finer psychic interactions to appraise them. So let us be satisfied to work in the rough for another aeon or two.

Success comes when you accomplish what you set out to do. Failure comes when something prevents you from carrying out your desired plan. We have to do here with a special relation between intent and execution. It influences happy living in various highly complicated ways, hence must be carefully studied.

As the world runs, there are five important varieties of success and failure. Here they are:

1. An act may accomplish vastly more than you had originally intended.
2. Or it may result just as you had hoped.
3. Or it may fall somewhat short of your intentions.
4. Or, while seeming to be a gross failure to outside observers, it may satisfy you simply because the essential features of it have been realized.
5. Or it may be a total failure, both as carrying out your original wish and as fulfilling what others have expected of it.

Henry Ford is the best living example of the first kind. He did not and could not foresee the colossal success of the little automobile he toiled over for so many years. He gained his end and a thousandfold more.

Kaiser Wilhelm illustrates admirably the last type. He cherished grandiose visions of his own career as ruler of the world. He willed a world empire, with himself at the head. He drew up immense plans, with himself at the refulgent center of them all. And he put eighty million people to work for his own glory. Never once did he dream of the preposterous debacle that lay ahead. And it took him years to realize it after it had happened. Indeed he does not seem yet to have grasped altogether the fact that he has ceased to be even a comic figure and is a mildly pathetic nonentity.

Most of us succeed or fail in one of the other three ways. And, of course, the third is by far the commonest. Can we say, now, that hap-

piness flows from success and unhappiness from failure, in any regular predictable way? No! And why not? Because wish-fulfillment in this narrower sense is only one of several factors which combine to determine happiness.

Many successful people are profoundly unhappy, just as Disraeli was at the height of his fame and fortune, when he wrote in bitterness:

“ . . . I can only tell you the truth . . . I am wearied to extinction and profoundly unhappy. . . . I do not think there is really any person much unhappier than I am, and not fantastically so. Fortune, fashion, fame, even power, may increase, and do heighten happiness, but they cannot create it. Happiness can only spring from the affections. I am alone, with nothing to sustain me, but, occasionally, a little sympathy on paper, and that grudgingly. It is a terrible lot, almost intolerable.”

Happiness involves in some wise pleasure. But all thoughtful observers agree that few pleasure states yield happiness. It is the common verdict of mankind that the happy state is something deeper and more lasting than the thrill of an instant's experience. But just what is the difference between the transient, superficial joy and the enduring depths?

This can be made clear only in terms of the total behavior of the personality. The mere feeling eludes analysis. You may say the thrill is sweeter, richer, stronger, or what not; but this does not help us much. Somebody may pipe up with the remark that he would describe his pleasure in a box of chocolate peppermints with the very phrases you have used. For thousands of years philosophers have struggled to measure the quantity of pleasures resulting from a given experience, but all in vain. Today we know that they attacked the problem wrongly. The thing to be measured is rather the state of the entire body and mind. Happiness is no mere emotion. It is a pattern of living. In it the entire personality figures. All of the thoughts, cravings, attitudes, memories, reflections and bodily movements somehow converge into a peculiar unity. The effective phase at best only reveals this unity in a few ways.

I can make this clearest by reporting a personal experience which enlightened me more than any other ever has.

It was July of my sixteenth year. I was bicycling from Detroit to New York City, away back in the forgotten days of dirt roads and slow horses. My ambition had been to cover a hundred miles daily, but thunder storms had turned the highways into deep, warm mud; and after each storm the heat grew wet and depressing. So I was far behind my schedule, as I drew near to Albany toward the end of a burning afternoon.

The hills, steep as barn roofs, could not be surmounted awheel. I had to walk up them, mile after mile. My thirst became a torment. I knew that, if I drank much water before the day's end, I would not be able to keep going; and I craved to make Albany before sundown. Then too, the well water thereabouts was not very good; what little I had sipped did not appeal to me.

In the last few miles, I passed out of the rainy region that had extended far beyond Utica; and now I was trudging in deep, choking dust. Teams, as they passed, stirred up immense clouds that filled my eyes and nose and mouth with their hot nastiness. All the fun had gone out of my trip. If there had been a railway station at hand, I probably would have rushed into the waiting room and bought a ticket to Albany—if not to New York.

Hill after hill! Then my aching legs finally mounted one on whose summit rose a lovely old brick house, under the shade of sleepy, drooping elms. In the midst of a great lawn was an ancient stone-rimmed well, and on the rim an oaken bucket. An old man stood at the roadside gate.

I asked for a drink. He waved me toward the well. Toward it I rushed as only a sixteen-year-old perishing with thirst can rush.

Memory plays one tricks. But it still seems to me that I must have emptied the bucket two or three times before I sat down in the shade and took my bearings. Then wonderful sights and sounds! First came a soft cool breeze through the elms. And after that a vision! Beyond the hill and far below me, I saw Albany and the Hudson River through a sea of hot haze. I would make my destination now without fail. The day would end right! And precisely as this realization of victory came, a woman in a white dress sat down at a piano beside an open window in the house and began playing Bach!

I stretched out on the grass, after dashing cold water over my face

and neck. I kept my eye on Albany, while my ears took in the most heavenly music they have ever heard. Then was the moment of high ecstasy. And never since then has one come which could quite equal it. In its time ceased, and of space there was none.

Music has always been the one stimulus that can sweep me to ecstasy. But that tinkling of Bach, in a full hour that seemed less than a thousandth of a second, carried me to heights never to be reached again in my life. After a third of a century, it still remains an utterly unique experience.

Unique, yes. But not at all inexplicable. Far from it! I have the advantage over many others whose highest ecstasies have centered on vaguer and vaster things such as religion and love. For every item in my complex emotion is crystal clear, and so too is the pattern. It aids me much in understanding the three intimately related levels of effective organization; namely, ecstasy, joy, and happiness.

My ecstasy was nothing more than a convergence of all wish fulfillments in a moment when I was able and willing to forsake effort, to relax, and to enjoy my victory. I was athirst, and I found cool, sweet water. I was dusty, and I escaped from the dust into a shady lawn far from the road. I was aching in every muscle, and here was a green couch on which to fling my body. I had been sighing to reach Albany for ever so long, and lo! Albany appeared before me. I was worn with climbing hills, and lo again! Albany was now all down hill from where I lay! I was hot and asweat, and a cool breeze came blowing, as if to order. I needed to relax, and the woman in a white dress came playing Bach, just as if she knew that the one thing in all the world that best relaxes me is music. In all the world there was nothing I then wished that did not then come true. And, best of all, I could forget work, duty, toil, striving, everything, and enjoy each and every delight.

Oh, Perfect Hour that never came again! In every lesser ecstasy there has been some trifle that has tainted its perfection. Once, years later, in Berlin, I was listening to Brahms and came close to complete experience—but suddenly two fat Germans began whispering criticisms of the cellos, and the spell was broken. So has it always been. A chemical trace of any foreign substance is enough to poison the cup of joy.



Now notice one other aspect. Psychic rest is complete. Space and time, as they are ordinarily experienced, simply cease. They are present, so to speak, only as minor ingredients of a vision. To people who have never had the experience, these words are meaningless. It seemed to me as though nothing was going or coming, nothing moving in myself. Detachment from my surroundings was so thorough that I was a disembodied spirit contemplating things *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Now I am sure that all this was nothing more nor less than a state of relative rest within the vital equilibrium; but a rest far deeper, more pervasive, and longer than such moments commonly are. It was the thorough opposite of that unrest which is pain, discomfort, and misery. And, just as, through moments of pain and misery, every minute seems a thousand years, so in this reverse state, a thousand years seems a minute.

What is the underlying mechanism here? It is surely quite simple, instead of being profound, as the mystics think. At the moment when every craving then active is fully satisfied, what chance is there that any fresh impulses will arise to initiate new lines of action? None! And what chance that any strong tension will persist in any set of muscles? Again none! Any such tension would itself constitute a slight craving; and the moment would therefore not be one of complete wish-fulfillment. But we are discussing only this complete type.

The extreme rarity of it is not at all strange. Any stimulus from without that is not an integral part of the satisfiers' sets up tiny responses which break the spell. That happened while I was listening to Brahms in Berlin. And so in 999 cases out of every thousand, merely by the "laws of chance." The odd feature of the Perfect Hour on the hill near Albany was that no such stimulus intruded upon me. There was nothing around to start such a stimulus. And within me was no tension. Only complete relaxation and rest!

Now, when there is no impulse and no tension apart from the insignificantly slight ones bound up in the mere acts of breathing, looking, and hearing, there can be no adjustment either to the past or the future, however near or far. For the mechanism wherewith we adjust to yesterday's and tomorrow's affairs are just those impulses and tensions which now, in the moment of ecstasy, have stopped. So we live in a

curious absolute Now which is no more the Now that the hands of the clock register than it is a color or an odor. It is not an instant in a sequence to which we adjust, as distinct from this morning's breakfast and tonight's concert. In a wholly untranslatable sense, it stands forth as timeless, as bounded by neither past nor present, and surely as something which does not melt into either of these.

Moments of ecstasy must be rare and brief. For life moves onward. The ecstatic man grows sleepy or hungry or cramped. Night falls, and its dew upon his brow sends a message to the resting mind. Energy stored up while he lingers in the timeless experience begins to leak through his nerves into his muscles. And soon he is in motion again.

There may remain, however, a larger rest in the midst of the petty flux and fuss of eating and sleeping and toiling and talking. The major cravings may find it easier and easier to be appeased, thanks to more favorable outer circumstances or to some new dexterity or some fresh insight. Intense desire may never have to continue. The great good things of life come quickly to hand, only the trifles lag or fail us wholly. And then, instead of ecstasy, we may come into a general psychic state that some religiously minded folk call the peace that passeth understanding. This peace is a variety of happiness intermediate between the ordinary kind and ecstasy. It often has something more than human about it, and for the same reason that ecstasy does. To the superstitious person, it appears as a gift of the gods and a sign of divine grace. But it is neither.

I have observed this enviable state in a few lucky men and women and find it to be the same as my own on the Albany Hill except for that weird timelessness and the absence of every petty impulse. In the peace that passeth understanding people go about their day's work somewhat as ordinary folks, though not quite so bustingly. They exhibit the serenity of the lotos eaters. The joy they are experiencing plainly does not originate in what they are doing at the moment. It is, in a good sense, a "hang-over." Inquiry brings out the fact that all of their deepest, strongest, most important cravings have been wholly satisfied, and their fondest hopes more than realized.

The most striking single case that has come under my eye is that of

a young woman who married the man she loved and found him to be in every respect finer than she had expected—which was saying a good deal. Through the months of her honeymoon, while on a trip around the world, she lived in continuous bliss of almost unendurable intensity. And she used to say, in all seriousness, that she wished she might have a little bad luck and suffering, so as to become human again.

She had always been an active, somewhat athletic woman. Now she lounged on her steamer chair, day after day, in a gentle glow and half-stupor. She would doze a while, then wake and chat languidly. She would read a book for a little while, then lapse into reverie that seemed, when judged only by its feeble outward manifestations, the gentlest of day-dreaming. There was nothing she wanted to do; nothing she wanted to have; nothing she wanted to be, beyond what she already did, had and was. But the minor routine of travelling was enough to keep her below the peaks of ecstasy.

There is a special sense in which this sort of peace “passeth understanding.” While it endures, the mind is utterly at rest. No problem confronts it. No novelty tempts it to speculate. It is a victorious conqueror for the nonce, resting on its laurels. Now it cannot understand its own state chiefly because its wheels will not turn. All’s well with the world, so why think? Thinking is hard work.

To the ordinary man people in this blissful state are useless cattle. They won’t work. They won’t take an interest in life’s serious problems. They prefer to drift down the sweet waters of life. Here is the root of the slothful conservatism of men and women who have gained all the good things of life. Reformers and idealists rave at them, sometimes calling them reactionaries—which they are not, save by chance.

Here we come upon one cause of the frequent misunderstanding about happiness. People who have never been, even for a brief hour, utterly satisfied suppose that happiness consists in some special kind of striving and doing. “To be happy, serve others.” “Be good, and you will be happy.” These doctrines often imply that the happy person must be urged on to accomplish something which can be specified and charted. When translated into religious language, the same kind of error appears

in the notion that heaven cannot be the sort of place described in the tradition of theologians, a place where there is neither time nor hurry, where everybody sits around gloriously doing nothing, where

Rest comes at length, though life be long and dreary.

It is

. . . A land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign;  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.

You recall how, in Kipling's poem, the jolly, jolly mariners who went to this heaven and had to sit on a golden floor thrumming golden harps, finally rebelled and asked God to send them down to the sea in ships again. Well, this rebellion typifies the mind of the modern, who thinks that happiness consists of activity.

One of his first spokesmen is Carl Hilty, the German thinker whose writings on happiness have so long been popular in his own country and have, in recent years, become almost a gospel among Americans. Hilty says:

"Work is certainly one great factor of human happiness—indeed, in one sense, the greatest; for without work all happiness which is not mere intoxication is absolutely denied. In order to get the capacity for happiness, one must obey the commands: 'Six days shalt thou labor,' and 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.' Of all seekers of happiness the most foolish are those who evade these conditions. Without work no man can be happy. In this negative statement the saying is absolutely true. And yet it is a greater error to suppose that work is in itself happiness. . . ."

In that last sentence Hilty proves himself keener than most of his followers. And yet he, a religious modernist, exaggerates enormously the part which work plays in happy living.

The modern is wrong, and the old theologians right. Happiness itself is the rest into which we arrive after we have been active and wholly successful in realizing all our powerful wishes. Once attained, it calls

for no further activity; and whatever we do thereafter is neither part nor parcel of that state. It is simply life going on. And life is not happiness. Life is living.

What our modern ought to say is that he is much more interested in strenuous living than in happiness. And that, of course, is a position that can be defended valiantly. But he must admit that interminable striving, without intervals of rest, contemplation, and a glance ahead, has its drawbacks, especially for people who are not vast reservoirs of seething energy.

Both the modern and the old philosopher-theologian have erred in that each has selected one phase of life and glorified it to the exclusion of the other. Both fail to comprehend that the process of living is rhythmic, one phase of the rhythm being action and the other being rest. To live is to pulsate. To pulsate is to alternate outbursts of action and moments of rest. Success is the outcome of the action. Happiness is the inner quality of the rest. And unhappiness is the inner quality of a moment of unrest after unsuccessful striving.

### ARNOLD BENNETT, 1867-1931

English novelist. His best-known novel is *The Old Wives' Tale* published in 1908.

EACH INDIVIDUAL MUST define happiness for himself or herself. For my part, I rule out practically all the dictionary definitions. In most dictionaries you will find that the principal meaning attached to the word is "good fortune" or "prosperity." Which is notoriously absurd. Then come such definitions as "a state of well-being characterized by relative permanence, by dominantly agreeable emotion . . . and by a natural desire for its continuation." This last is from Webster, and it is very clever. Yet I will have none of it, unless I am allowed to define the word "well-being" in my own way.

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For me, an individual cannot be in a state of well-being if any of his faculties are permanently idle through any fault of his own. The full utilization of all the faculties seems to me to be the foundation of well-being. But I doubt if a full utilization of all the faculties necessarily involves the idea of good fortune, or prosperity, or tranquillity, or contentedness with one's lot, or even a "dominantly agreeable emotion"; very often it rather involves the contrary.

In my view happiness includes chiefly the idea of "satisfaction after full honest effort." Everybody is guilty of mistakes and of serious mistakes, and the contemplation of these mistakes must darken, be it ever so little, the last years of existence. But it need not be fatal to a general satisfaction. Men and women may in the end be forced to admit: "I made a fool of myself," and still be fairly happy. But no one can possibly be satisfied, and therefore no one can in my sense be happy, who feels that in some paramount affair he has failed to take up the challenge of life. For a voice within him, which none else can hear, but which he cannot choke, will constantly be murmuring:

"You lacked courage. You hadn't the pluck. You ran away."

And it is happier to be unhappy in the ordinary sense all one's life than to have to listen at the end to that dreadful interior verdict.

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# Tranquillity of Mind



SIR HUGH WALPOLE, 1884-1941

British novelist who achieved wide popularity  
with such books as *Fortitude* and *The Fortress*

WHAT IS HAPPINESS? This is a dangerous question to ask, partly because there is no real answer to it, partly because any honest discussion of it may include a certain amount of priggishness and partly because to confess to happiness today implies a smug complacency and callousness to the general misfortunes of the world.

All the same I am going to try. Who are the happiest people I have known during my life? Undoubtedly the Saints.

Of these, naturally, I have met very few; during my childhood Dr. Westcott, Bishop of Durham, and then my mother and father, a soldier in the Russian Army and an old woman in Cornwall—there may have been one or two more.

My father and mother are interesting examples to me of a happiness increasing through life because of increasing goodness and unselfishness. My father, when he was young, was narrow-minded and dogmatic.

As he grew older, simply through his own consciousness of his own faults and limitations, he became broad-minded and astonishingly understanding and unselfish. He never thought of himself, and loved all the world, although he never understood what sin really was.

My mother, on the other hand, was shy, sensitive and self-conscious; she could not believe that people liked her and she was nervously afraid of the world.

She, too, simply by recognition of her own weaknesses, developed her

character all through life, until at the end when she was over seventy she enjoyed everything, books, theatres, travel, and was gay and humorous (she had an enchanting, rather cynical, humor)—and was tolerant, like my father, of all the world. These were saints, or at least became so through constant effort and self-discipline.

Who, on the other hand, is the unhappiest human being I know? A man who is constantly unhappy, although he doesn't know it, a man I care for deeply; he is an enormous success, but he gets no happiness from his success because when he hears applause he feels that it is only his rightful due, and when he meets criticism the faults always belong to others rather than to himself.

He is, in fact, a deep-fathoms-sunk egoist; and the very first condition I would give for happiness is to have a sense of values wider than one's own life and personality. This means, I think, to have a spiritual life—not necessarily a religious one.

Any doctor, or scientist, or philanthropist who cares for some cause or creed more than for what happens to himself has a spiritual life. If you have this life you must have with it all the things that are worth while; love of liberty, honour, belief in your fellow human beings without too much credulity, patience, and a sense of humour and courage.

And now let's come down to earth a little. To be happy you must, I think, work, and it must be work that you like. I think this is one of the principal ways in which civilization has not yet found itself, namely, that so many human beings do not do work that they like.

How this is to be brought about, that everyone should love the work they do, I don't quite know, but that it will be brought about one day I am sure.

This creative impulse is the strongest thing in man and he always demands that it shall be satisfied. The whole history of his life is very often his search for that satisfaction.

With work I put physical health, but here I am not quite so certain, for some of the happiest people I have known have been invalids, hopeless cripples, blind people, and even (a courage that is to myself incredible) sufferers from continuous physical pain.



Rather than physical health I ought perhaps to say the capacity to deal with the conditions of one's body. Everyone discovers, after being on this earth for a certain number of years, that he is born to certain physical conditions and this includes sexual instincts.

The happy people deal with these conditions as part of the job that they have to carry out in life, not of necessity acquiescing, perhaps indeed fighting all the time, but not, on the other hand, pretending that these conditions are not there.

This fitting oneself into the conditions one is given rather than resenting life because one wants other conditions is, I suppose, one of the first necessities for happiness.

Then there is the great question of love and friendship. This, many people would put first of all, and I do think that love is the first necessity of life, whether it be love of God, love of a human being, or love of all humanity. The difficult questions of adjustment in marriage are beyond my scope, but as in any case every newspaper discusses them every day of the week my opinion is not needed.

But the most wonderful of all things in life, I believe, is the discovery of another human being with whom one's relationship has a glowing depth, beauty, and joy as the years increase. This inner progressiveness of love between two human beings is a most marvellous thing, it cannot be found by looking for it or by passionately wishing for it. It is a sort of Divine accident.

As to friendship: another one of the most unhappy men I know is one who is always losing his friends and cannot understand why. He loses them because he gives them nothing on his side.

He is a delightful man, intelligent, humorous, and enterprising, but he is never interested in what his friends are doing; they must always write to him first before he sees them, and when he is with them he has no thought of anybody but himself.

This business of friendship is something that needs constant attention, reciprocity and forbearance on both sides, also no humbug. If the elements which gave the friendship its strength disappear, then be frank and let the friendship disappear, too. There is nothing that brings more unhappiness than the attempt to keep alive that which no longer exists in reality.

I would add two more things, both of my own experience. Happiness in mature life comes partly, I think, from unhappiness in childhood. That is a dangerous thing to say, and I suppose, if I had children of my own, I should spoil them to death.

For myself, I was very miserable until I was aged twenty, and for the last thirty-four years I have been, for the most part, very happy.

My parents were in America when I was young and I hated my early schooldays so bitterly that I remember, when I was in the Russian Army waiting with some carts for the wounded under fire all night, I was, at about three in the morning, so badly frightened that it was all I could do not to run away; but I said to myself, "This is not so bad as it was at —," and that steadied me.

I have known poverty, have had several serious operations, have lost people I loved dearly, have been bitterly disappointed in my work, saw war with its utmost horrors for two years, have been in three revolutions, have had many bodily complaints, and yet nothing that has happened to me since I was twenty has approached in fear and loneliness and terror the things that happened to me when I was a boy.

I still sometimes feel that my life since twenty is a kind of dream, and fancy that I will wake up again in that dormitory at —, waiting in an agonized panic to be beaten up and down the dormitory with knotted handkerchiefs. Every day I think that it is a miracle of life that I am having such a good time, not, that is to say, being beaten eternally by knotted handkerchiefs.

And this brings me to my other possession, namely, my capacity, even in my present elderly state, for enjoying what are, I suppose, very small things. Last night, for example, I went to the Holborn Empire, and on the way there I was tasting on my tongue the exquisite pleasure I would shortly obtain from the company of my friends, Mr. Max Miller and Mr. Vic Oliver—and I did obtain it.

I enjoy all kinds of things with what seems to many of my friends extravagant pleasure, but then they don't know, most of them, about that dormitory at —. I find that I am most happy whenever I have fitted into the conditions I am given.

I would, for example, dearly love to be a meticulous, beautiful writer

like Virginia Woolf, or a super-intelligent, all-knowledge-comprehending thinker like Aldous Huxley.

When, as I constantly do, I realize that I shall always be the careless, voluminous, rather derivative writer that I am, I become, if I permit myself, unhappy. As soon as I realize that I am what I am, I become tranquil again.

Yes, but someone may say, "Would it not be better for you to be a little unhappy, you might then become a handsome writer?" To which I answer, "The little bit better writer I might become is of no value to anybody. It is of value to a number of people that I shouldn't be megalomaniac."

Finally, I end where I began. I believe the root of all happiness on this earth to lie in the realization of a spiritual life with a consciousness of something wider than materialism; in the capacity to live in a world that makes you unselfish because you are not over-anxious about your personal place; that makes you tolerant because you realize your own comic fallibilities; that gives you tranquillity without complacency because you believe in something so much larger than yourself.

### JOSEPH ADDISON, 1672-1719

English essayist, poet and statesman. Addison's contributions to the *Spectator* were witty, polished and urbane, and distinguished, above all, by their clarity of style and precision in the choice of words.

TRUE HAPPINESS is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp and noise; it arises, in the first place, from the enjoyment of one's self; and, in the next, from the friendship and conversation of a few select companions. It loves shade and solitude, and naturally haunts groves and fountains, fields and meadows: in short, it feels everything it wants within itself, and receives no addition from multitudes of witnesses

and spectators. On the contrary, false happiness loves to be in a crowd, and to draw the eyes of the world upon her. She does not receive any satisfaction from the applause which she gives herself, but from the admiration which she raises in others. She flourishes in courts and palaces, theatres and assemblies, and has no existence but when she is looked upon.

### SENECA, 3 B.C.—A.D. 65

Roman philosopher, dramatist and statesman,  
he was one of the greatest of the stoic philosophers.

TRUE HAPPINESS IS to be free from perturbations; to understand our duties toward God and man; to enjoy the present, without any anxious dependence upon the future; not to amuse ourselves with either hopes or fears, but to rest satisfied with what we have, which is abundantly sufficient; for he that is so wants nothing. The great blessings of mankind are within us, and within our reach; but we shut our eyes, and, like people in the dark, we fall foul of the very thing we search for without finding it. Tranquillity is a certain equality of mind which no condition of fortune can either exalt or depress. Nothing can make it less, for it is the state of human perfection: it raises us as high as we can go, and makes every man his own supporter, whereas he that is borne up by anything else may fall. He that judges aright, and perseveres in it, enjoys a perpetual calm; he takes a true prospect of things; he observes an order and measure in all his actions; he has a benevolence in his nature; he squares his life according to reason, and draws to himself love and admiration. Without a certain and unchangeable judgment, all the rest is fluctuation. Liberty and serenity of mind must necessarily ensue upon the mastering of those things, which either allure or affright us, when, instead of those flashy pleasures (which even at the best are both vain and hurtful together), we shall find our-

selves possessed of an excellent joy assured and continual peace and repose of soul. There must be sound mind to make a happy man; there must be constancy in all conditions, a care for the things of this world, but without trouble, and such an indifferency to the bounties of fortune, that either with them or without them we may live content. There must be neither lamentation, nor quarrelling, nor sloth, nor fear, for it makes a discord in a man's life. He that fears serves. The joy of a wise man stands firm without interruption; in all places, at all times, and in all conditions, his thoughts are cheerful and quiet. Into what dangerous and miserable servitude he falls who suffers pleasures and sorrows (two unfaithful and cruel commanders) to possess him successively! I do not speak this either as a bar to the fair enjoyment of lawful pleasures, or to the gentle flatteries of reasonable expectations. On the contrary, I would have men to be always in good humour, provided that it arises from their own souls, and is cherished in their own breasts. Other delights are trivial; they may smooth the brow, but they do not fill and affect the heart. True joy is a serene and sober motion, and they are miserably out that take laughing for rejoicing. The seat of it is within, and there is no cheerfulness like the resolution of a brave mind, that has fortune under its feet. He that can look death in the face, and bid it welcome; open his door to poverty, and bridle his appetites; this is the man whom Providence has established in the possession of inviolable delights. The pleasures of the vulgar are ungrounded, thin, and superficial; but the others are solid and eternal. As the body itself is rather a necessary thing than a great, so the comforts of it are but temporary and vain; whereas a peaceful conscience, honest thoughts, virtuous actions, and an indifferency for casual events, are blessings without end, satiety, or measure.

A wise man, in what condition soever he is, will always be happy, for he subjects all things to himself, submits himself to reason, and governs his actions by counsel, not by passion. He is not moved with the utmost violences of fortune, nor with the extremities of fire and sword; whereas a fool is afraid of his own shadow, and surprised at ill accidents, as if they were all levelled at him. He does nothing unwill-

ingly, for whatever he finds necessary, he makes it his choice. He propounds to himself the certain scope and end of human life: he follows that which conduces to it, and avoids that which hinders it. He is content with his lot, whatever it be, without wishing for what he has not, though of the two, he had rather abound than want. The business of his life, like that of nature, is performed without tumult or noise: he neither fears danger nor provokes it; but from caution, not from cowardice; for captivity, wounds, and chains he looks upon as unreal terrors. He undertakes to do well that which he does. Arts are but the servants whom wisdom commands. He is cautious in doubtful cases, temperate in prosperity, and resolute in adversity; still making the best of every condition, and improving all occasions to make them serviceable to his fate. Some accidents there are which, I confess, may affect him, but they cannot overthrow him; such as bodily pains, loss of children and friends, or the ruin and desolation of his country. One must be made of stone or iron not to be sensible of these calamities; and besides, it were no virtue to bear them if one did not feel them.

Virtue is that perfect good which is the complement of a happy life; the only immortal thing that belongs to mortality. It is the knowledge both of others and of itself; it is an invincible greatness of mind, not to be elevated or dejected with good or ill fortune. It is sociable and gentle, free, steady, and fearless; content within itself, full of inexhaustible delights, and it is valued for itself. One may be a good physician, a good governor, a good grammarian, but without virtue one cannot be a good man. It is not the matter but the virtue that makes the action good or ill; and he that is led in triumph may be yet greater than his conqueror. When we come once to value our flesh above our honesty we are lost. And with regard to the loss of friends and things temporal, may we not say, if virtue remains, What matters it whether the water be stopt or no, so long as the fountain is safe? Is a man ever the wiser for a multitude of friends, or the more foolish for the loss of them? So neither is he the happier nor the more miserable. Short life, grief, and pain are accessions that have no effect at all upon virtue. It consists in the action, and not in the things we do; in the choice itself, and not

in the subject matter of it. It is not a despicable body or condition—not poverty, infamy, or scandal, that can obscure the glories of virtue; but a man may see her through all oppositions, and he that looks diligently into the state of a wicked man will see the canker at his heart through all the false and dazzling splendours of greatness and fortune.

There are some that live without any design at all, and only pass in the world like straws upon a river; they do not go, but they are carried. Others only deliberate upon the parts of life, and not upon the whole, which is a great error, for there is no disposing of the circumstances of it, unless we first propound the main scope. How shall any man take his aim without a mark? or what wind will serve him that is not yet resolved upon his port? We live, as it were, by chance, and by chance we are governed. Some there are that torment themselves afresh with the memory of what is past; others, again, afflict themselves with the apprehension of evils to come: and very ridiculously both; for the one does not now concern us, and the other not yet. Besides, there may be remedies for mischiefs likely to happen, for they give us warning by signs and symptoms of their approach. Let him that would be quiet take heed not to provoke men that are in power, but live without giving offence; and if we cannot make all great men our friends, it will suffice to keep them from being our enemies. This is a thing we must avoid as a mariner would do a storm. A rash seaman never considers what wind blows or what course he steers, but runs at a venture, as if he would brave the rocks and the eddies; whereas he that is careful and considerate informs himself beforehand where the danger lies, and what weather it is like to be. He consults his compass, and keeps aloof from those places that are infamous for wrecks and miscarriages. So does a wise man in the common business of life: he keeps out of the way from those that may do him hurt; but it is a point of prudence not to let them take notice that he does it on purpose, for that which a man shuns he tacitly condemns. Let him have care also of listeners, newsmongers, and meddlers in other people's matters; for their discourse is commonly of such things as are never profitable, and most commonly dangerous either to be spoken or heard.

Never pronounce any man happy that depends upon fortune for his happiness, for nothing can be more preposterous than to place the good of a reasonable creature in unreasonable things. If I have lost anything, it was adventitious; and the less money, the less trouble; the less favour, the less envy; nay, even in those cases that put us out of our wits, it is not the loss itself, but the opinion of the loss that troubles us. It is a common mistake to account those things necessary that are superfluous, and to depend upon fortune for the felicity of life, which arises only from virtue. There is no trusting to her smiles; the sea swells and rages in a moment, and the ships are swallowed up at night in the very place where they sported themselves in the morning. And fortune has the same power over princes that it has over empires; over nations that it has over cities; and the same power over cities that it has over private men. Where is that estate that may not be followed upon the heel with famine and beggary? that dignity, which the next moment may not be laid in the dust? that kingdom that is secure from desolation and ruin? The period of all things is at hand—as well that which casts out the fortunate, as the other that delivers the unhappy; and that which may fall out at any time, may fall out this very day. What shall come to pass I know not, but what may come to pass I know; so that I will despair of nothing, but expect everything, and whatsoever Providence remits, is clear gain. Every moment, if it spares me, deceives me, and yet in some sort it does not deceive me; for though I know that anything may happen, yet I know likewise that everything will not. I will hope the best, and provide for the worst. Methinks we should not find so much fault with fortune for her inconstancy, when we ourselves suffer a change every moment that we live; only other changes make more noise, and this steals upon us like the shadow upon a dial—every jot as certainly, but more insensibly.

Happy is that man that eats only for hunger and drinks only for thirst, and lives by reason, not by example, and provides for use and necessity, not for ostentation and pomp. Let us curb our appetites, encourage virtue, and rather be beholden to ourselves for riches than to fortune, who, when a man draws himself into a narrow compass,



has the less to aim at. Let my bed be plain and clean, and my clothes so too; my meat without much expense or many waiters, and neither a burden to my purse nor to my body. That which is too little for luxury is abundantly enough for nature; the end of eating and drinking is satiety. Now, what matters it though one eats and drinks more, and another less, so long as the one is not a-hungry, nor the other a-thirst?

In the distribution of human life, we find that a great part of it passes away in evil-doing, a greater yet in doing just nothing at all, and, in effect, the whole in doing things besides our business. Some hours we bestow upon ceremony and servile attendances, some upon our pleasures, and the remainder runs at waste. What a deal of time is it that we spend in hopes and fears, love and revenge, in balls, treats, making of interests, suing for offices, soliciting of causes, and slavish flatteries! The shortness of life, I know, is the common complaint both of fools and philosophers, as if the time we have were not sufficient for our duties. But it is with our lives as with our estates—a good husband makes a little go a great way; whereas let the revenue of a prince fall into the hand of a prodigal, it is gone in a moment. So that the time allotted us, if it were well employed, were abundantly enough to answer all the ends and purposes of mankind; but we squander it away in avarice, drink, sleep, luxury, ambition, fawning addresses, envy, rambling voyages, impertinent studies, change of councils; and the like, and when our portion is spent, we find the want of it, though we give no heed to it in the passage, insomuch that we have rather made our life short than found it so. You shall have some people perpetually playing with their fingers, whistling, humming, and talking to themselves; and others consume their days in the composing, hearing, or reciting of songs and lampoons. How many precious mornings do we spend in consultation with barbers, tailors, and tire-women patching and painting betwixt the comb and the glass? A council must be called upon every hair we cut, and one curl amiss is as much as a body's life is worth. The truth is, we are more solicitous about our dress than our manners, and about the order of our periwigs than that of the govern-

ment. At this rate let us but discount, out of a life of a hundred years, that time which has been spent upon popular negotiations, frivolous armours, domestic brawls, saunterings up and down to no purpose, diseases that we have brought upon ourselves; and this large extent of life will not amount, perhaps, to the minority of another man. It is a long being, but perchance a short life. And what is the reason of all this? We live as if we should never die, and without any thought of human frailty; when yet the very moment we bestow upon this man or thing may peradventure be our last. But the greatest loss of time is delay and expectation, which depends on the future. We let go the present, which we have in our power; we look forward to that which depends upon fortune, and so quit a certainty for an uncertainty. We should do by time as we do by a torrent—make use of it while we may have it, for it will not last always.

It is a hard task to master the natural desire of life by a philosophical contempt of death, and to convince the world that there is no hurt in it, and crush an opinion that was brought up with us from our cradles. What shall we say to human frailty, to carry it fearless through the fury of flames, and upon the points of swords? What rhetoric shall we use to bear down the universal consent of people to so dangerous an error? The captious and superfine subtleties of the schools will never do the work. These speak many things sharp, but void of effect. It is not that I propound the making of death so indifferent to us, as it is whether a man's hairs be even or odd; for what with an implanted desire in everything of preserving itself, and a long acquaintance betwixt the soul and body, death may carry an appearance of evil, though in truth it is itself no evil at all. Besides that, we are to go to a strange place in the dark, and under great uncertainties of our future state; so that people die in terror, because they do not know whither they are to go and they are apt to fancy the worst of what they do not understand.

But what is it we fear? Oh! It is a terrible thing to die. Well! and is it not better once to suffer it than always to fear it? The earth itself

suffers both with me and before me. How many islands are swallowed up in the sea? How many towns do we sail over? Nay, how many nations are wholly lost, either by inundations or earthquakes? And shall I be afraid of my little body? Why should I, that am sure to die, and that all other things are mortal, be fearful of coming to my last gasp myself? Die we must, but when? What is that to us? It is the law of nature, the tribute of mortals, and the remedy of all evils. It is only the disguise that affrights us, as children that are terrified with a mask. Take away the pomp and circumstances that accompany it, and death is no more than what my slave yesterday contemned: the pain is nothing to the tortures of disease; if it be tolerable it is not great, and if intolerable it cannot last long. There is nothing that nature has made necessary which is more easy than death. We are longer a-coming into the world than going out of it. It is but a moment's work the parting of the soul and body. What a shame is it, then, to stand in fear of anything so long that is over so soon!

Nor is it any great matter to overcome this fear; for we have examples, as well of the meanest of men as of the greatest, that have done it. There was a man condemned to die in the arena, who, in disdain, thrust a stick down his own throat and choked himself; and another, on the same occasion, pretending to nod upon the chariot as if he were asleep, cast his head betwixt the spokes of the wheel, and kept his seat till his neck was broken. The most timorous of creatures, when they see there is no escaping, oppose themselves to all dangers; the despair gives them courage, and the necessity overcomes the fear. If it shall please God to add another day to our lives, let us thankfully receive it; but, however, it is our happiest and securest course so to compose ourselves tonight that we may have no anxious dependence upon tomorrow. He that can say, I have lived this day, makes the next clear again.

## BUDDHA, 563(?)–483(?) B.C.

Founder of Buddhism, one of the chief religions of the East

HAPPY IS THE solitude of him who is full of joy, who has learnt the truth, who sees the truth! Happy is freedom from malice in this world, self-restraint towards all beings who have life! Happy is freedom from lust in this world! Joy and gladness shall be yours, as you school yourself by day and by night in the things that are right. Because they find in the Lord's teachings a high excellence, they live a life so joyous and joyful.

The virtuous man is happy in this world. And he is happy in the next. He is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done. He is still more happy when going on the good path. Wise people, meditative, steady, always possessed of strong powers, attain to the highest happiness. He who, seeking his own happiness, does not punish or kill beings who also long for happiness, will find happiness after death.

O joy! We live in bliss amongst men of hate, hating none. Let us indeed dwell among them without hatred. O joy! In bliss we dwell, healthy amidst the ailing. Let us indeed dwell amongst them in perfect health. Happy indeed we live, unanxious among the anxious. All unanxious dwell we in the midst of anxious men. Victory breeds hatred; for, the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, being contented, is happy. Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age. Pleasant is faith firmly rooted. Pleasant is attainment of intelligence. Pleasant is avoiding of sins.

One should learn virtue, which is of extensive goal, and which hath the faculty of happiness. And one should devote oneself to charity, to tranquil behavior, and to the thoughts of friendship. Having devoted himself to these three virtues, which provide reason for happiness, a wise man gaineth the world of happiness. He who leads a regular life, having understood what is good, and penetrated the truth, will obtain happiness.

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# The Larger Wisdom



BENEDICT (BARUCH) SPINOZA, 1632-77

One of the greatest of all thinkers, Spinoza was excommunicated from the Jewish Church because of his unorthodox opinions. His *Ethics* constitutes one of the great contributions to the stream of modern thought.

EVERY MAN'S TRUE happiness and blessedness consist solely in the enjoyment of what is good, not in the pride that he alone is enjoying it, to the exclusion of others. He who thinks himself the more blessed because he is enjoying benefits which others are not, or because he is more blessed or more fortunate than his fellows, is ignorant of true happiness and blessedness, and the joy which he feels is either childish or envious and malicious. For instance, a man's true happiness consists only in wisdom, and the knowledge of the truth, not at all in the fact that he is wiser than others, or that others lack such knowledge: such considerations do not increase his wisdom or true happiness.

Whoever, therefore, rejoices for such reasons, rejoices in another's misfortune, and is, so far, malicious and bad, knowing neither true happiness nor the peace of the true life.

## ARISTOTLE, 384-322 B.C.

Greek philosopher. One of the greatest thinkers of all time, he studied under Plato and was the tutor of Alexander the Great.

IT REMAINS to give some account of happiness, which we pronounce to be the aim and end of human life.

We have stated that happiness is not a particular disposition of character, because if it were it might be possessed by a person who passed the whole of his time asleep, living the life of a vegetable, or by someone afflicted with the greatest misfortunes. We have to reject these implications as unsatisfactory, and must rather class happiness as an activity. But there are two kinds of activity, one merely adopted as the necessary means for securing some other object, the other desirable in itself. And it is clear that happiness must be classed as a thing desirable in itself and not for the sake of something else, inasmuch as it is self-sufficient and complete.

Now the activities desirable in themselves are those which are not pursued for the sake of some extraneous result but for their own sake. And this describes activities in conformity with virtue. Honourable and virtuous conduct is desirable for itself.

Happiness therefore does not consist in amusement. Indeed it would be curious if amusement were our chief object, and if we toiled and suffered all our life long for the sake of play. Happiness is the one object which is not pursued as a means for obtaining something else, but is an end in itself. To strive and labour for the sake of securing more amusement seems foolish and childish in the extreme. The northern prince's dictum, "Play in order to be able to work better," seems the right rule. Amusement is a kind of relaxation, and people need relaxation because they cannot go on working continuously without a break. Recreation therefore is not an end in itself; it is pursued as a means of greater ac-

tivity. The happy life is thought to be a life of virtue, and this involves serious effort, and does not consist in mere play.

In our view serious things are on a higher level than amusements and sports, and the nobler a faculty or a person is, the more serious are their activities. Therefore the activity of the nobler faculty or the nobler person is on a higher level, and therefore more productive of happiness.

The pleasures of the body can be enjoyed by anyone—by a slave as much as by the best of us. But no one supposes that a slave can participate in real happiness, any more than he can have a life of his own.

These considerations show that happiness does not consist in pastimes and amusements, but in activities in conformity with virtue, as has been said above.

But if happiness is activity in conformity with virtue, it is reasonable to suppose that it is in conformity with the highest virtue, which must be the virtue belonging to the highest part of our nature. This is our intellect. . . .

Contemplation is the highest form of activity, because the intellect is the highest part of our nature, and the things apprehended by it are the highest objects of knowledge. Also it is the most continuous form of activity; we can go on reflecting more continuously than we can pursue any form of practical activity. Moreover we feel that happiness is bound to contain an element of pleasure; but the activity of philosophic contemplation is admittedly the most pleasurable of all the activities in conformity with virtue. Philosophy is thought to comprise pleasures of marvellous purity and permanence; and it is reasonable to hold that the enjoyment of knowledge already acquired is a more pleasant occupation than research directed to the acquirement of new knowledge. Also the activity of contemplation will be found to possess in the highest degree the quality designated self-sufficiency. It is of course true that the wise man, as well as the just man and those possessing all the other virtues, requires the necessities of life; but given a sufficient supply of these, whereas the just man needs people towards whom and in partnership with whom he may act justly, and similarly the self-controlled man and the brave man and the others, the wise man can practise contemplation by himself, and the wiser he is the better he can do this. . . .

Also happiness is thought to involve leisure. We practise business in order to gain leisure, and we go to war in order to secure peace. Thus the practical virtues are exhibited in the activities of politics or of warfare, and the actions connected with these seem to be essentially un-leisurely. Military activities are entirely a business matter: nobody goes to war for choice, just in order to have a war, or takes deliberate steps to cause one. A man would be thought to be an absolutely bloodthirsty person if he made war on a friendly state in order to bring about battles and bloodshed. The life of active citizenship also is devoid of leisure; besides the actual business of politics it aims at winning posts of authority and honour, or at all events at securing happiness for oneself and one's friends—objects which are clearly not the same thing as mere political activity in itself. We see therefore that the occupations connected with politics and with war, although standing highest in nobility and importance among activities in conformity with the virtues, are devoid of leisure, and are not adopted for their own sakes but as means to attaining some object outside themselves. But the exercise of the intellect in contemplation seems to be pre-eminent in point of leisure and to aim at no result external to itself; the pleasure it contains is inherent, and augments its activity. Consequently self-sufficiency and leisure, as well as such freedom from fatigue as lies within the capacity of human nature, and all the other advantages that we think of as belonging to complete bliss, appear to be contained in this activity. Therefore the activity of contemplation will be the perfect happiness of man,—provided that it continues throughout a complete lifetime, since in happiness there must be nothing incomplete.

But the life described will be above the level of humanity; a man will pursue it not in virtue of this human nature but by the power of a divine element that is in him. Also the activity described will excel those in which the other virtues are manifested as widely as that divine element stands out as the highest part of man's composite nature. If then the intellect is something divine as compared with man as a whole, it follows that the life of the intellect is divine in comparison with human life as a whole. Therefore we must not listen to those who advise us, because we are men, to think human thoughts and, because we are



mortal, to think the thoughts of mortality. So far as is in our power we must achieve immortality, and use every effort to guide our lives by the best element in our natures. This element may be small in size, but in potency and value it far surpasses all the other parts of a man's personality. In fact as being the ruling part and the best part, it may be thought actually to be the man himself. It would be strange then if he chose to live the life of someone else and not his own life. . . . That which is best and pleasantest for any being is that which by nature especially belongs to it; and consequently the best and pleasantest life for man is the life of the intellect, inasmuch as the intellect pre-eminently is the man. This life therefore will be the happiest.

On the other hand the life of moral virtue is happy in a secondary degree; for the moral activities are purely human. Justice and courage and the other virtues we exercise in our relations with our fellows, when we are careful to give every man his due in contracts and services, and in our own various actions and also in our emotions; and all these seem to be purely human affairs. Some moral actions appear to arise out of our bodily constitution, and virtue seems to have an affinity at many points with the emotions. Also prudence is closely connected with moral virtue, and moral virtue with prudence, inasmuch as the first principles of prudence conform with the moral virtues, and the right standard in morals is given by prudence. Moreover, as being connected with our emotions the moral virtues seem to belong to our composite nature; but the virtues of our composite nature are human; so therefore are the life and the happiness which conform with those virtues. The excellence of the intellect is entirely separate—so much may be said about it here, to give a full and precise account of it would be a bigger task than our present undertaking requires. And intellectual excellence would also appear to require little external equipment, or less than is needed by moral virtue. It may be granted that both require equally the necessities of life . . . for there is little difference between them in this. But there will be a great deal of difference in what they require for their special activities. The liberal man will need wealth in order to practice liberality, and even the just man will require some wealth in order to return the services rendered to him, since mere intentions are not visible to others,

and even unjust men pretend to wish to act justly. The brave man will need power if he is to accomplish any deeds in conformity with his virtue, and the self-controlled man opportunity to exhibit self-control, as without opportunity how is he or any other of the virtuous characters to display their virtue? Also it is debated whether purpose or performance is a more important factor in virtue, which is taken to involve both. In order to be perfect, virtue clearly requires both; but doing things needs much equipment, and the greater and more honourable the deeds done the more equipment they require. The student on the other hand for the purpose of his activity needs nothing of this kind. In fact such things are almost an impediment to contemplation, although as a man living in the company of other men the student will choose to do virtuous deeds, and therefore will require accessories of this sort for the sake of his life as a human being.

And it appears that one who lives the life of the mind, and cultivates his intellect and keeps that in its best condition, is the man whom the gods love best. It is the common belief that the gods pay heed to the affairs of men. If this is true, it is reasonable to assume that the gods take pleasure in what is best and most akin to themselves, namely man's intellect, and that they requite with benefits those who pay the highest respect to the life of the mind, because these men care for the things that are dear to themselves and these men act rightly and nobly. But manifestly all these attributes belong in the highest degree to the wise man. He therefore is the man dearest to the gods, and consequently it is he who will presumably be supremely happy. This is another indication that the philosopher is the happiest of mankind.

But the philosopher being human will also require material well-being, because man's nature is not sufficient in itself for the practice of contemplation, but must have bodily health and food and attendance. Yet even though supreme felicity does need a supply of external goods, it must not be supposed that in order to be happy a man will require any great abundance of resources. Self-sufficiency does not depend on very lavish supplies, nor does moral conduct; and a man can do noble deeds

without being monarch of land and sea. In fact one can act virtuously with but moderate resources. We may see this clearly, because private individuals appear to conduct themselves not less but more virtuously than princes and potentates. Thus moderate resources are sufficient, since a life of virtuous activity will be essentially happy.

Also the description of happiness given by Solon was no doubt a good one. He said that happy men were men who possessed a moderate amount of material goods and who had achieved noble deeds and lived a temperate life. For it is possible, as he believed, for men to do their duty with but moderate possessions. Anaxagoras also does not seem to have conceived the happy man as rich or powerful; he says he should not be surprised if the really happy man were to seem a strange figure to most people! Ordinary people judge by externals, which are all they can see.—So the opinions of wise men seem to be in agreement with the views we are putting forward.

### WILLIAM LYON PHELPS, 1865-1943

American educator and critic, for many years  
one of Yale's most popular professors

NO MATTER what may be one's nationality, sex, age, philosophy or religion, everyone wishes either to become or to remain happy. Hence definitions of happiness are interesting. One of the best was given in my senior year at college by President Timothy Dwight: "The happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts."

This definition places happiness where it belongs—within and not without. The principle of happiness should be like the principle of virtue; it should not be dependent on things, but be a part of personality. Suppose you went to a member of a state legislature and offered him five hundred dollars to vote for a certain bill. Suppose he kicked you out

"Happiness" by William Lyon Phelps. Reprinted by permission of Frederick T. McKeon and by special permission from the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Copyright 1927. The Curtis Publishing Company.

of his office. Does that prove he is virtuous? No; it simply proves you can't buy him for five hundred. Suppose you went to the same man a month later and offered him a million dollars—that is, instead of making him a present, you make him and his family independent for life, for the best thing about having money is that if you have it you don't have to think about it. Suppose now, after listening to this offer, he should hesitate. That would mean he is already damned. He is not only not virtuous, he knows nothing about virtue. Why? Because his virtue is dependent not on any interior standard but on the size of the temptation. If the temptation is slight, he can resist; if large, he weakens. Such virtue is like being brave when there is no danger, generous when you have nothing to give, cheerful when all is well, polite when you are courteously treated.

Fortunately there are in every state legislature some men who have no price, who are never for sale, who look upon all alluring bribes with equal scorn—and these are the virtuous men. After the same order, there are boys who are just as safe in Paris as in Reading; just as safe at three o'clock in the morning as at three o'clock in the afternoon; just as safe with evil companions as with good companions. Why? Because these boys do not allow time, place and people to determine their conduct; they attend to that matter themselves. Their standards are within.

So far as it is possible—it is not always possible—happiness should be like virtue. It should be kept or lost, not by exterior circumstances but by an inner standard of life. Yet many people who read this article will lose their happiness before next Sunday, though I hope they recover it. But why lose it even for a season? There are people who carry their happiness as a foolish woman carries a purse of money in her hand while walking on a crowded thoroughfare. The first man who is quick with his fingers, nimble with his feet, and untrammelled by conscience can and will take the purse away and disappear with it. He will have separated the woman and her money. Now if one's happiness is like that, an exterior thing, dependent on an enemy's volition, on a chance dis-

aster, on an ill wind, on any one of a thousand accidents to which we are all exposed—the happiness can be lost.

All of us have enemies. I regard myself as on the whole an amiable person, and yet there are a considerable number of people who, when they hear of my death, will feel relieved. I care as little about that fact now as I shall then. I do not intend to let other people, especially those who do not like me anyhow, determine whether I shall have peace of mind or not. If someone reports to you a malicious word that someone else has said of you, and in consequence of that you become unhappy, you have allowed another person to hold the key of your heart, to settle whether you shall be happy or not. I insist that you ought to determine that question for yourself. Instead of being angry or distressed when people hate you, suppose you regard it as amusing; for if you are honestly trying to do your best, and incur hatred for your pains, there is about such a situation something funny. If you can appreciate the humor of it you are free.

It is impossible for anyone to feel every moment exuberantly happy; to feel, on rising from bed every morning, like a young dog released from a chain. If you felt that way continuously you would become an intolerable nuisance, you would get on everybody's nerves. But I am certain that with the correct philosophy it is possible to have within one's personality sources of happiness that cannot permanently be destroyed. You will have days and nights of anguish, caused by ill health, or worry, or losses, or the death of friends; but you will not remain in the Slough of Despond; you will rise above depression and disaster because you will have within your mind the invincible happiness that comes from thinking interesting thoughts.

If the happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts, then the mind is more important than either of those tremendous blessings, wealth and health. I never indulge in slighting remarks about money, because if I did I should be a hypocrite. Money is a blessing; I should be glad to distribute a large sum to every one of my readers, of course reserving the usual commission. But money is not the chief factor in happiness. If it were, then everyone who had money would be happy and everyone without it would be unhappy; but there are so

many wealthy people who are unhappy and so many poor people who are cheerful, that money, however important or desirable, is not the determining cause. It would be folly to speak slightly of health. No one realizes what a blessing health is until one has lost it; then one has to devote time and energy and money to recovering it. Anyone who is careless of his health is a traitor; because one's usefulness, one's capacity to do good in the world is usually seriously lessened by poor health. Yet even health is not the *sine qua non*. People without it think they would be perfectly happy if they were well. A man with a toothache imagines that everyone in the world without a toothache is happy; but it is not so. There are healthy people who are not happy; and there are invalids whose face, eyes and conversation reveal an inner source of happiness that enables them to triumph over bodily ills. They have overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

I should be sorry to lose what money I have, but unfortunate as it might be, such a loss would not permanently destroy my happiness. I should be sorry to be run over by an automobile and lose my right leg; but such a loss would not permanently destroy my happiness. Why not? Because my happiness is centered neither in my purse nor in my leg, but in my mind, my personality. The Irish dramatist, St. John Ervine, lost a leg in the war. I asked him which he would prefer—to have two sound and healthy legs again and not be able to write novels and plays, or to be as he is now, with only one leg, but an accomplished man of letters. He did not hesitate. He said there was no comparison possible; he would far rather be a one-legged writer than a two-legged something else. "And yet," he murmured thoughtfully, "I do miss that leg."

There is another important consideration. If the happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts, then we grow happier as we grow older.

I know that such a statement runs counter to the generally expressed opinion. The majority of novels and poems and the common gossip of society assume that youth is the golden time of life.

When I was an undergraduate a distinguished man addressed us, and he said emphatically, "Young gentlemen, make the most of these four years; for they are the happiest years you will ever know." The remark was given to us with that impressiveness that so often accompanies a falsehood. For it was a falsehood. My classmates and I have been out of college nearly forty years; most of us are happier now than then.

I read many French novels, and I often see a woman of forty-five described as a "woman for whom life was over." Over at forty-five? And why? Because men do not stare at her goggle-eyed. Doubtless it is sweet to be admired, doubtless flirtation is one of the normal pleasures of youth, doubtless it is agreeable to be regarded as a pretty animal; but is that all there is in life for a woman? One cannot penetrate below the surface of such a statement without finding an insult to personality.

No one should make a statement like "youth is the happiest time of life" without being prepared to accept its intellectual consequences. Now if it were really true that youth is the happiest time of life, nothing would be a more tragic spectacle than young men and maidens; for they would in their present state have attained the pinnacle, the climax of existence; before them would lie fifty years of diminuendo, of decay, of accumulating loss, of descent into ever-darkening days.

The belief that youth is the happiest time of life is founded on a fallacy—on a false definition of happiness. Many people think that to be free from physical pain and mental worry is perfection; knowing that as we grow older our physical pains and mental worries are apt to increase, they assume that youth is the happiest time of life. We are, of course, all animals; but we ought not to be merely animal. I suppose that in the case of animals youth is the happiest time of life; a puppy is happier than an old rheumatic hound; a young jackass braying in the pasture is presumably happier than an old donkey laboriously drawing a cart; but these are merely animals and lack man's greatest gift—the possibility of development.

Those who say that childhood is the happiest time are unconsciously postulating the animal definition: A child is happiest because he is healthy and has no worries; when he is cold somebody covers him; when he is hungry somebody feeds him; when he is sleepy somebody

puts him to bed. Yes, but when he is not sleepy somebody puts him to bed. There is the shadow on the sunny years; there is the fly in the ointment. Personally I had rather have a few worries and aches, and go to bed when I choose. A child is as dependent as a slave. If you would rather be a healthy, well-fed slave than an independent man, you will prefer childhood to maturity. A child is at the mercy of adults both physically and mentally. They are stronger than he and can force him to do what they wish; they are cleverer than he and can invariably outwit him.

Happiness is not altogether a matter of luck. It is dependent on certain conditions. One should prepare for happiness as an athlete prepares for a contest. Leave out the things that injure, cultivate the things that strengthen, and good results follow. It is important to grow old successfully, for everyone must either grow old or die; and although the pessimists tell us that life is not worth living, I observe that most individuals hang on as long as they can. It is sad to see so many men and women afraid of growing old. They are in bondage to fear. Many of them, when they find the first gray hair, are alarmed. Now one really ought not to be alarmed when one's hair turns gray; if it turned green or blue, then one ought to see a doctor. But when it turns gray, that simply means there is so much gray matter in the skull there is no longer room for it; it comes out and discolors the hair. Don't be ashamed of your gray hair; wear it proudly, like a flag. You are fortunate, in a world of so many vicissitudes, to have lived long enough to earn it.

There are some foolish people who say, "Well, I mean to grow old gracefully." It is impossible; it can't be done. Let us admit it because it is true; old people are not graceful. Grace belongs to youth and is its chief charm. The poet Browning hints that youth has beauty and grace because youth would be intolerable without it. Young people are decorative; that is why we like them. They are slender, agile, fair and graceful, because nobody could stand them if they were otherwise. It would be horrible if boys and girls, knowing as little as they do, were also bald, grayheaded, fat, wrinkled, and double-chinned; then they would be unendurable. But Nature has so arranged matters that young people are



physically attractive until they acquire some brains and sense and are able to live by their wits; then they lose these superficial advantages. As responsibility grows, beauty and grace depart. The child sits on your knee and reaches for your watch. You smile, and say, "Nice baby, can't have de watch!" But when he is thirty and reaches for your watch you put him in jail. More is expected of us, more is demanded of us as we grow older; nothing is more tragic therefore than a woman of mature years with the mind of a child. There is in civilized society no place for her.

But even if it were possible to grow old gracefully, it would be at best a form of resignation, a surrender; and a soldier of life should not take it lying down. Instead of growing old gracefully, suppose we grow old eagerly, grow old triumphantly. Is this possible? With the right mind and character, with the right attitude, with the right preparation, it is not only possible, it is probable. Joseph H. Choate was no deluded enthusiast; he was a hard-headed man of the world. When he was past seventy, in a public address in New York he maintained that the happiest time of life was between seventy and eighty years of age; "and I advise you to hurry and get there as soon as you can."

Let us examine another fallacy. It is said that as we grow older we lose our illusions. Of course we do. I do not believe I have a single illusion left; if I have I would gladly lose it today. For what happens when you lose an illusion? Every time you lose an illusion you gain a new idea. Ideas are far more interesting, hence pleasure giving, than illusions. The world as it is, men and women as they are, are more worth knowing than fancy pictures created by ignorance and inexperience. We are told that youth is happy because youth looks on the world through rose-colored spectacles. But I have no desire to look at the world through rose-colored spectacles, and I can prove that you haven't. That repository of wisdom and experience, Robert Browning, at the age of 77, wrote:

Friend, did you need an optic glass,  
Which were your choice? A lens to drape  
In ruby, emerald, chrysopras,

Each object—or reveal its shape  
Clear outlined, past escape,

The naked very thing?—so clear  
That, when you had the chance to gaze,  
You found its inmost self appear  
Through outer seeming—truth ablaze,  
Not falsehood's fancy-haze?

This can very easily be determined by our old friend in political economy, the law of supply and demand. Demand fixes the price; a thing in great demand is worth more than something for which the demand is feeble. Suppose you were going to Europe this summer and stopped in at the optician's to buy a pair of powerful binoculars. Suppose he should suggest that instead of getting that, you took a kaleidoscope, where instead of looking at distant objects, you saw pretty rosettes, bright combinations of colored glass. "Do you think I am a child, to be amused with rose-colored toys?" "Ah, but distance lends enchantment to the view; when you see a ship five miles away she is as beautiful as a swan. But if you look at her with binoculars, you see shreds and patches. Surely you don't want the truth." Surely you do. And the proof is that anyone can buy rose-colored glasses cheaply, but every time you increase the power of the lens—that is, every time you bring reality nearer—the price goes up enormously. If then we are willing to pay cash to substitute truth for illusion, let us be done with saying that youth is happy because of illusion. As we grow older our eyes become achromatic; rose colors fall away, and we see life more nearly as it is, and find it more interesting.

It is also often said that as we grow older we lose our enthusiasms. This need not be true; it is never true with right-minded individuals. There is a fallacy lurking in such a statement. The fallacy is this: We confound the loss of the object that aroused our enthusiasm with the loss of enthusiasm—a very different thing. Things that excite children often fail to arouse mature men and women—which is not a sign that maturity has lost sensitiveness to excitement; it may have lost interest

in childish things. When I was a child the happiest day in the year was the Fourth of July. It was not illusory happiness; it was real; it was authentic bliss. Its cause? On the Fourth of July mother allowed me to rise at midnight, go out on the street and yell till daybreak. Think of it! I, who usually was forced to retire at eight, was out on a city street at three in the morning, shrieking and yelling! It was delirious joy. Now suppose you should tell me that tomorrow I may rise at midnight and yell till daybreak. I decline. Does that mean I have lost my happiness or my enthusiasm? No; it means that I don't care to rise at midnight. During the daytime of the glorious Fourth I used to shoot off fire-crackers hour after hour with undiminished zeal. Every now and then I would see a very old man, about thirty-two, come along, and I would offer him an opportunity to share my delight. He always declined. "Poor fellow!" I reflected. "Life is over for him. He has lost his happiness." It never occurred to me that people over thirty had any fun. I supposed they had to go through the routine of life but had no pleasure in it.

The fact that a girl of three is enchanted by the gift of a doll, and the same girl at seventeen insulted by it, does not mean that the girl at seventeen has lost either her happiness or her enthusiasm; but that the enthusiasm, formerly aroused by dolls, is now stimulated by something else.

If the happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts we are bound to grow happier as we advance in years, because our minds have more and more interesting thoughts. A well-ordered life is like climbing a tower; the view halfway up is better than the view from the base, and it steadily becomes finer as the horizon expands.

Herein lies the real value of education. Advanced education may or may not make men and women more efficient; but it enriches personality, increases the wealth of the mind, and hence brings happiness. It is the finest insurance against old age, against the growth of physical disability, against the lack and loss of animal delights. No matter how many there may be in our family, no matter how many friends we may have, we are in a certain sense forced to lead a lonely life, because we have all the days of our existence to live with ourselves. How essential

it is then in youth to acquire some intellectual or artistic tastes, in order to furnish the mind, to be able to live inside a mind with attractive and interesting pictures on the walls. It is better to be an interesting personality than to be an efficient machine. The reason so many go to destruction by the alcoholic route is because they cannot endure themselves; the moment they are left alone with their empty minds they seek for stimulant, for something to make them forget the waste places. Others rush off to the movies, run anywhere, always seeking something to make them forget themselves.

Higher education, the cultivation of the mind, is more important for women than for men, because women are more often left alone. A large part of masculine activity is merely physical; men run around like dogs. But a woman, even in these emancipated days, is forced to be alone more than man. Now take the instance of a girl who has been brought up happily in a large family, with plenty of neighbors and friends, whose bright days pass in happy activities and recreations; she is married to a suburbanite in New Jersey. Every morning he takes the 7:37 train to New York and does not return till the 6:48 in the evening. The young wife, rudely transplanted from a cheerful home, is placed in an empty house in a town where she knows no one, and is alone all day. God help her if she has no mental interests, no ideas, no interesting thoughts. I have no desire to underestimate the worth of physical comfort or the charm of youth; but if happiness really and truly consisted in physical ease and freedom from care, then the happiest individual would not be either a man or a woman. It would be, I think, an American cow. American cows and American dogs are ladies and gentlemen of leisure; in Europe they hitch them up and make them draw loads. Take, therefore an average day in the life of an American cow, and we shall see that it is not far from the commonly accepted ideal of human happiness. The cow rises in the morning, and with one flick of her tail her toilet is completed for the whole day. There is a distinct advantage over humanity. It takes the average woman—and it ought to—about three-quarters of an hour every single day to arrange her appearance.

The cow does not have to brush her teeth; the cow does not have to bob her hair; the cow does not have to carry a compact; the cow does not have to select appropriate and expensive garments. One flick, and she is ready. And when she is ready breakfast is ready.

She does not have to light the kitchen fire herself or to mourn because the cook has left without notice. The grass is her cereal breakfast and the dew thereupon is the cream. After eating for an hour or so she gazes meditatively into the middle distance, querying first, whether that grass yonder is lusher and greener than this, and second, if it be so, whether peradventure it is worth the trouble to walk there and take it. Such an idea as that will occupy the mind of a cow for three hours.

After grazing, like Goethe, without haste and without rest, she reaches by noon the edge of a stream. "Lo, here is water; what hinders me from descending and slaking my thirst?" She descends about waist-deep into the cooling stream; and after external and internal refreshment she walks with dignity to a spreading tree, and sits down calmly in the shade. There and then she begins to chew the cud. Cows are never perturbed by introspection or by worry.

There are no agnostic cows; no Fundamentalist or Modernist cows; cows do not worry about the income tax or the League of Nations; a cow does not lie awake at night wondering if her son is going to the devil in some distant city.

Cows have none of the thoughts that inflict upon humanity distress and torture. I have observed many cows, and there is in their beautiful eyes no perplexity; their serene faces betray no apprehension or alarm; they are never even bored. They have found some happy *via media* by which they escape from Schopenhauer's dilemma, who insisted that man had only the vain choice between the suffering of unsatisfied desire and the languor of ennui.

Well, since the daily life of an American cow is exactly the existence held up to us as ideal—physical comfort with no pains and no worries—wouldn't you like to be a cow? Very few human beings would be willing to change into cows, which must mean only one thing: Life,

with all its sorrows, cares, perplexities and heartbreaks, is more interesting than bovine placidity, hence more desirable. The more interesting it is, the happier it is. And the happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts.

### VARDHAMANA-JINA, c. sixth century B.C.

These two prophets were the acknowledged founders of Jainism, a religious system of India.

THIS ROAD to happiness has been declared by the noble ones: that a clever man should not be defiled by sin. Thou shouldst know and consider the happiness of living creatures. Subdue yourself; for the self is difficult to subdue. If your self is subdued, you will be happy in this world and in the next. Time elapses; and quickly pass the days. The pleasures of man are not permanent. They come to a man, and leave him—just as a bird leaves a tree void of fruit. By the teaching of true knowledge, by the avoidance of ignorance and delusion, and by the destruction of hatred one arrives at final deliverance, which is bliss.

### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1706-90

American writer, scientist and statesman. His *Autobiography* which covers only his early years is regarded as one of the finest examples of this type of literature.

THE DESIRE OF happiness in general is so natural to us, that all the world are in pursuit of it; all have this one end in view, though they take such different methods to attain it, and are so much divided in their notions of it.

Evil, as evil, can never be chosen; and, though evil is often the effect of our own choice, yet we never desire it, but under the appearance of an imaginary good.

Many things we indulge ourselves in may be considered by us as evils, and yet be desirable; but then they are only considered as evils in their effects and consequences, not as evils at present, and attended with immediate misery.

Reason represents things to us, not only as they are at present, but as they are in their whole nature and tendency; passion only regards them in their former light. When this governs us, we are regardless of the future, and are only affected with the present. It is impossible ever to enjoy ourselves rightly, if our conduct be not such as to preserve the harmony and order of our faculties, and the original frame and constitution of our minds; all true happiness, as all that is truly beautiful, can only result from order.

Whilst there is a conflict betwixt the two principles of passion and reason, we must be miserable in proportion to the struggle; and when the victory is gained, and reason so far subdued as seldom to trouble us with its remonstrances, the happiness we have then is not the happiness of our rational nature, but the happiness only of the inferior and sensual part of us, and consequently a very low and imperfect happiness, to what the other would have afforded us.

If we reflect upon any one passion and disposition of mind, abstract from virtue, we shall soon see the disconnection between that and true, solid happiness. It is of the very essence, for instance, of envy to be uneasy and disquieted. Pride meets with provocations and disturbances upon almost every occasion. Covetousness is ever attended with solicitude and anxiety. Ambition has its disappointments to sour us, but never the good fortune to satisfy us; its appetite grows the keener by indulgence, and all we can gratify it with at present serves but the more to inflame its insatiable desires.

The passions, by being too much conversant with earthly objects, can never fix in us a proper composure and acquiescence of mind. Nothing but an indifference to the things of this world, an entire submission to the will of Providence here, and a well-grounded expectation

of happiness hereafter, can give us a true satisfactory enjoyment of ourselves. Virtue is the best guard against the many unavoidable evils incident to us; nothing better alleviates the weight of the afflictions, or gives a truer relish of the blessings, of human life.

What is without us has not the least connection with happiness, only so far as the preservation of our lives and health depends upon it. Health of body, though so far necessary that we cannot be perfectly happy without it, is not sufficient to make us happy of itself. Happiness springs immediately from the mind; health is but to be considered as a condition or circumstance, without which this happiness cannot be tasted pure and unabated.

Virtue is the best preservative of health, as it prescribes temperance, and such a regulation of our passions as is most conducive to the well-being of the animal economy; so that it is, at the same time, the only true happiness of the mind, and the best means of preserving the health of the body.

If our desires are to the things of this world, they are never to be satisfied. If our great view is upon those of the next, the expectation of them is an infinitely higher satisfaction than the enjoyment of those of the present.

There is no happiness, then, but in a virtuous and self-approving conduct. Unless our actions will bear the test of our sober judgments and reflections upon them, they are not the actions, and consequently not the happiness, of a rational being.

### MANUEL KOMROFF, 1890-

American novelist and short story writer

I ONCE KNEW a writer who was quite poor. He lived in a furnished room somewhere downtown on the fringe of the slums. But he was happy.

"Take a Step Down for Happiness" by Manuel Komroff. Reprinted by permission of the author.



He was content with his abode, and he enjoyed the plain people who lived in the streets about him. He understood them; and it was these people that he put into his books.

Each day brought him new adventures and each day he worked. He spent his evenings with his friends, who were all people of fairly humble means. The evenings were lively, filled with good humor and punctuated by laughter. In this way fifteen years went by, on the whole most pleasantly.

But one day he awoke to find that one of his books was a best-seller. This and more. It had been bought by the movies for a hundred thousand dollars! It seemed only just that an author who had struggled for fifteen years eventually should have a break. He gave up his small downtown home and moved uptown.

Soon we heard from him. He invited us to his duplex apartment in a fashionable studio building. It was furnished with paintings, rich carpets, tapestries, imitation antiques, and a large desk, which had been remodeled, especially for him, from an old-fashioned square piano.

"This is sure a swell place!" we were forced to exclaim as we entered.

"Yes," he admitted. "I always wanted a place like this."

Here it was that we met publishers' assistants, Broadway agents, and women with pretentious airs. Each tried to outrival the other in being clever and keeping the conversation sharp and brittle.

In this artificial atmosphere we spoke very little. We felt awkward and ill at ease. Soon we departed.

"It was very nice," said one.

"It's not natural," protested another.

"That is how it is in the world."

"Not my world," someone added.

You know, of course, what happened to our friend. The hundred thousand was not really squandered; it was merely lost in speculation. In three years our friend returned to us.

"Really," he said, "I was never happy up there. But I thought I was doing what was expected of me."

I believe this was true. He was not happy there. It was all too artificial. It was the wrong step up. It was all a lie. And when he stepped

down one step, he was back where he felt at ease. The first rule for happiness certainly would be: Avoid the Lie.

We all know people who are living beyond their means, trying to keep up with the Joneses, or pretending to be a good deal more than they really are. They are truly unhappy people. They are trying to live a step or two above their natural plane. And it is very hard to live a lie.

A woman I knew had pretended for years that she was a titled Russian. She would tell you about the servants, carriages and jewels she had had in the good old days. It was all untrue.

It would have been awkward to challenge these exaggerated statements, and I don't think anyone ever did. At least not outwardly. But from a very early date it was whispered about that this was all a lie. The truth was known. Her father was an official in a government office. He was a good, hard-working man of the upper middle class. This should have been sufficient; but no, she would have you believe she was a suffering princess in exile. She even pretended that the free air of democracy was stifling. What happened?

She married a good man, and they had an attractive daughter. But the lie was a heavy one. Every minute of the day she was playing princess. It made the air of their home oppressive. It was uncomfortable to visit them. The poor husband chafed under this load. And as soon as their daughter was eighteen, she ran away. She eloped to get away from home, to get away from the lie. And the husband? He loved his child, and for her sake he put up with everything. But the moment she married, he moved away, and the "princess" is now alone in a big, empty house. What a great mess a little pretense can make!

A fish will travel far but remain in its own waters, and a bird may migrate for thousands of miles but still hold to familiar routes and abodes. And what is true for fish and birds also is true for men and women. At home we are at ease, and the places where we feel at ease are like being at home.

"Make yourself at home," says the hostess to her guest.

But this is not easy when the air is filled with a "princess" lie or any other unnatural pretense. And there are also intellectual pretenders who fill the air about them with discomfort. These people have acquired a

bookful of facts they mistake for knowledge. These collectors of odd facts are really unhappy souls trying hard to make up for shyness and loneliness. They often win arguments, but they often lose friends. If they could only step down one step, I believe all pretense would vanish. And they would be happy.

Somehow or other I never have felt the need of dusty learning in order to pass the day pleasantly. I believe that one laughs easier when one is not too heavily shackled with involved reason, logic, or any of the other acquired processes of the mind. I think that it is natural to be happy and that one is happy only when one can be natural.

To be natural is merely being at ease. But this is an art. Avoid the lie. And the second rule for happiness would be: Make yourself at ease. They go together. And going down a step seems to bring them together.

Napoleon's mother was never at ease in the palace at Fontainebleau. He took her there after he became emperor of France. Leading her into the main marble hall, he said proudly, "How do you like this, Mother?"

"It's very nice," she admitted. Then she added quickly, "As long as it lasts."

She feared it would not last, and her fears were justified. Some years later this marble palace served as a temporary prison for her son. It was there that he signed his abdication. She would have been happy under the roof of a simpler home. In a palace she was miserable.

Marie Antoinette, who was born in a palace, was never quite happy. The atmosphere she lived in was highly artificial and filled with intrigue and fears. She might have lived happily and many years longer if she only could have stepped down one little step. From but one step closer to her people she never could have exclaimed: "Then let them eat cake."

Napoleon's mother and Marie Antoinette are extremes of low and high. As for myself, I avoid both low and high. I hold to my own kind of place. For it is with my own kind of people that I laugh the most.

They know me, and I know them. We are at ease, and no lie lurks between us.

For some people this simple device is not easy. Strip them of their pretensions and little affectations, and they feel quite naked. The lie has become a habit, and deep-seated habits are not easy to uproot. But once they are uprooted, the air seems free and clear.

One of the happiest men I ever met was a veterinary in the West. One day I asked him what the secret of his happiness was.

"There is no secret," he said quickly.

But then he looked at me with a broad glance and added: "Perhaps there is. If you had known me a few years ago, you would not have thought me very happy. I lived in daily fear. I was practising medicine at that time, and I had no legal right to practise medicine. I had been a hospital orderly for a number of years, and bought a diploma from Chicago mail-order college and came out here. I guess I was as good as the average run of country doctor in these parts. But the dagger of fraud hung over me, and fear of being detected weighed heavily on my spirit. I was miserable until I qualified as a veterinary and took the state examinations. Now it's horses and dogs, and my diploma is genuine. It was a step down, but I have no fear. I can look any man in the eye. Even horses and dogs seem to have confidence in me. They do not shy away, as they usually do from unhappy people. Funny thing, that. An animal can always sense a lie and is suspicious of a person who is not at ease."

There was no denying that he was a happy man. He was at ease with man and beast, and the lie of his life had been dispelled. He could even talk about it and laugh. He was happy. He had made his peace with the complicated circumstances of life. One little step down made all the difference in the world.

In that single step down there is the spirit of humility. Arrogance, pride, and conceit are destroyed in one stroke. True wisdom steps down and is ever modest.

## ANDRÉ MAUROIS, 1885-

French author whose fame as a biographer was established with the publication of *Ariel*, his life of Shelley

FONTENELLE, in his *Traité du Bonheur*, defines happiness as a state in which we desire to remain without change of any sort. Unquestionably, if we were able to achieve a state of mind and body which made us say to ourselves: "I want everything to be like this forever," and as Faust to the Moment: "Oh, stay, thou who art so beautiful," we would be truly happy.

But if, by the word "state," we mean the combination of phenomena which occupies a person's consciousness at a given moment, this unchanged duration seems inconceivable. It could not even be perceived as duration. How could there be no change, when the composing elements of the perfect happiness are so unstable? If it is a question of another person, death may intervene; if of music, the music will cease; if of a book, its last page will eventually be read. We may well desire the unchanged duration of a state, but we know that this stability is impossible; and that in any case if we could render the moment stationary the happiness it brought us would soon diminish, because the novelty would have gone.

We must therefore distinguish among the elements which make up our state of happiness those numerous ones that can change without diminishing it and those that are necessary to its duration. In Tolstoy's novel, *Anna Karenina*, Levine, who has just become engaged, walks through the streets admiring everything; the sky is bluer, the birds sing more sweetly, and the old doorkeeper gives him an unusually affectionate look. But Levine, on that day, would have been just as happy

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in any other city; he would have found it and its people just as attractive. There is a light within him that shines upon everything and this inner light is the essence of his happiness.

It is not events and the things one sees and enjoys that produce happiness, but a state of mind which can endow events with its own quality, and we must hope for the duration of this state rather than the recurrence of pleasurable events. Is this state actually an interior one, and can we recognize it otherwise than by the changes it produces in all exterior things? If we exclude sensation and memory from our thoughts, there is nothing left but a wordless emptiness. Where can pure ecstasy and pure happiness be found? As certain phosphorescent fish see the deep water, the seaweed, and the other creatures of the sea lighting up at their approach but never perceive the moveable source of this illumination because it is in themselves, so the happy man, though he is aware of his effect upon others, has difficulty in perceiving his happiness and even greater difficulty in predicting it.

Perhaps it will be easier to get at the truth by enumerating the obstacles in the way of happiness. Open Pandora's box and, as the misfortunes of humanity take flight, make mental notes of the more common ones.

First, poverty and sickness whirl darkly through the air. Of all misfortunes these are the most to be dreaded. When their visitations are too often repeated, very few remedies are effective. It is easy but useless to pretend, as the Stoic philosophers did, that suffering is merely a word. "For past suffering exists no longer," they said, "present suffering is undiscernible, and future suffering is not yet with us." Actually this is not the case. Man cannot at will dissociate the different periods of his existence. The remembrance of past suffering makes present suffering an ever increasing burden. A strong man can doubtless fight suffering and preserve his serenity in spite of it. Montaigne courageously endured a very painful malady, but what is a wise man, or even a saint, to do when his life is nothing but a groan of agony?

Diogenes could quite well make little of poverty, for he had the warmth of the sun, his food, his tub, and he was alone in life. What if he had been jobless with four children to feed in a city with a cold

climate where food could be bought only with cash? Here is real misfortune, and it is insulting to offer the consolations of philosophy to people who are cold and hungry. Food and coal are what they need.

These extreme cases of sickness and poverty must not be confused with predicaments which, though painful, are infinitely less hard to endure and do not put unsurmountable obstacles in the way of happiness. The Stoics were right when they differentiated between our "natural and necessary" requirements—food and drink—and our "natural but not necessary" ones. There is real poverty and there are real sicknesses for which one cannot have too much pity. But there are as many imaginary invalids in the world as real ones. Our minds have unbelievable power over our bodies and much of our suffering is imaginary. Some men are really ill; some believe themselves to be ill; and some make themselves ill. When Montaigne was mayor of Bordeaux, he said to his fellow citizens: "I am willing to take your affairs in hand, but not into my liver and lungs."

There is imaginary poverty in the world as well as imaginary illness. To declare yourself unfortunate because a crisis which affects everyone has reduced your income is insulting to those who are really poor, so long as you have a roof over your head, food to eat, and clothes to wear. A friend once told me of a charwoman who killed herself because she was obliged to move into a room in which there was no place for a greatly prized piece of furniture—another case of imaginary misfortune.

After poverty and sickness comes failure: failure to achieve one's ambition, failure in love. We make plans for the future; they are thwarted and our hopes are destroyed. We want to be loved; we are not loved, and jealousy poisons our days and nights. We hope to get a job and make a success of it, to travel, but we fail to do so. The Stoic philosophers triumph easily here because the majority of these misfortunes are unreal; they are matters of opinion. Why is a man miserable when his ambitions cannot be realized? Is it because he suffers physically? Not at all. It is because he remembers the shortcomings that caused his past failures and wonders whether his future success will be hindered by the intrigues of his rivals. If, instead of thinking about

what the past could have been and what the future is likely to be, he made an effort to arrive at an exact realization of the present, what would be the result? Almost always a perfectly satisfactory state of affairs. I should like to see people with imaginary troubles adopt the method suggested by Saint Ignatius, which is to visualize the object of one's desires clearly and without distortion.

You wanted to be governor of a state and you failed. What will result? You will not be obliged all day long to interview people whom you prefer not to see. You will not be burdened with hundreds of matters which you have not had time to consider carefully. You will not be opposed by hostile people who will look into your private life and discover crimes you did not commit. You will be forced to live a peaceful life and to enjoy your leisure, to reread your favorite books and, if you have a taste for companionship, to chat with friends. That is what your failure will amount to if you exercise a little imagination. Is it a misfortune? "Tonight," wrote Stendhal, "I am slightly vexed at my two subordinates being made department magistrates and not myself; my vexation, however, would be greater if I were obliged to bury myself for four or five years in some hole with six thousand inhabitants."

If men could regard the events of their own lives with more open minds, they would frequently discover that they did not really desire the things they failed to obtain. There is a great difference between spoken wishes such as: "I should like to get married . . . to be a senator . . . to paint a good portrait," and actual burning desires which consume one's whole being. The latter make themselves known by acts. Unless the desire is absolutely impossible and absurd, it may frequently be achieved if enough determination is used. A man who desires honors obtains honors; he who wants friends gets them; a woman who desires conquests makes conquests. The young Bonaparte wanted power; the obstacles to its achievement seemed unsurmountable; he surmounted them.

Of course there are many cases where circumstances render success impossible; it is not easy to move the universe and the difficulty frequently lies in the man himself. He thinks he desires to achieve a



definite result, but some inner force pulls him in the opposite direction. How often have writers said to me that they would like to write such and such books if the kind of life they led did not make it impossible. If they passionately desired to write the books, they would lead different lives. Evidence of Balzac's strength of will and devotion to his work can be found in the kind of life he led or, more precisely, in the work itself.

We all have the right to examine our lot. A man decides to marry a certain woman for social or business advancement, or for money, but he knows and everyone knows that she is second-rate. In two or three months he will be complaining of her stupidity; but was he not already aware of it? This was in the lot. No great amount of experience is required to discover that the greedy search for money or success will almost always lead men into unhappiness. Why? Because that kind of life makes them depend upon things outside themselves. No one is more vulnerable than the ambitious man; some incident he knows nothing of, or some remark incorrectly repeated, will turn an influential man against him or cause a nation to persecute him. He will say that he had bad luck, that fate was against him. Fate is always against those who seek benefits, the acquiring of which does not depend upon themselves. That was in the lot also. The gods are justified.

Greed and ambition place us in conflict with our fellow men, but it is far worse to be in conflict with ourselves. For we are happy when we can examine yesterday's actions and those of our whole life and say: "Perhaps I have acted unwisely; I may have been mistaken, but I did my best and I followed my own ideas. What I have said I can say again, or if my ideas have changed I can admit without shame that there were good reasons for my errors which were due to listening to incorrect information, or to my own faulty reasoning." When this interior harmony exists, the need for painful self-communion vanishes.

In reality, this agreement with oneself is somewhat rare. There are, in each one of us, two beings: a member of society and a human being with passionate feelings—an intellect and an animal. It is very unpleasant to realize that we are a prey to self-indulgence and that we are wise men only during a part of our lives. A harmonious agreement

with oneself is difficult to achieve because many of our thoughts have very different origins from the ones we like to give them. We pretend that we are talking reasonably when, with false judgment and weak arguments, we are merely working off an old grudge. We are hostile to a certain group of people because one of its members has done us some serious injury. We refuse to admit these weaknesses, but our conscience tells us that they exist and we become dissatisfied with ourselves, we become bitter, violent, absurd, and we insult our friends because we know we are not the men we should have liked to be. Whence the importance of Socrates's "Know thyself." In order to achieve serenity, the intelligent man must first make objective all thought-distorting passions and memories.

Another cause of unhappiness is the fear of danger. I do not mean to say that certain fears are not legitimate and even necessary. A man who is not careful to avoid being hit by a swiftly moving automobile will die on account of this lack of visual imagination. A nation which does not fear armed and hostile neighbors will soon be enslaved. But fears serve no purpose when they concern unpredictable events. We all know men who are so apprehensive of illness that their lives are destroyed. The man who is afraid that his money will be lost imagines the various ways in which he can be ruined and deprives himself of present happiness in order to be ready for misfortunes which, if they occurred, would merely reduce him to the state in which his fear has placed him. The jealous man foresees dangerous encounters with other men for the woman he loves; he struggles to put these imaginings from him and in the end he kills her love with his crazy watchfulness and thus brings on the catastrophe he feared.

The acute mental suffering caused by fear is all the more useless because anticipation is usually far worse than actuality. Illness is horrible, but it is less so than we are led to expect from the spectacle of our afflicted fellow beings, because fever and the habit of illness create, as it were, another body which reacts differently. Many of us are afraid of death, but nothing that we imagine regarding our death can be true; for all we know, we may die suddenly; also in normal cases the natural phenomenon of death has its various corresponding physical

states. I remember distinctly meeting with an accident which might have been fatal. I lost consciousness, but the memory I have of the few seconds immediately preceding the accident is not a painful one. I knew a man who, like Er, the Armenian, had come back from Hades; I mean that he had been virtually drowned and then revived. He said that his death had not been painful. Our notions of the future are almost always false; we imagine future misfortunes with the point of view of men who live in the present. Life is difficult enough as it is. Why introduce an element of melancholy apprehension? In a well-known motion picture, there is a scene on board a great liner: two young people on their honeymoon are standing at the rail looking at the sea, and we hear the orchestra playing. They move apart, disclosing a life buoy with the ship's name on it: *Titanic*. For us in the audience, the scene becomes tragic because we know that the *Titanic* is going to sink, but the actors in the drama are merely enjoying another beautiful evening. If they had feared a tragedy, their fear would have been legitimate, but it would have spoiled a delightful hour uselessly. Many people spoil their whole lives by imagining imminent misfortunes. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Among the idle rich, boredom is one of the most common causes of unhappiness. People who have difficulty in earning their living may suffer greatly, but they are not bored. Wealthy men and women become bored when they depend upon the theater for their enjoyment instead of making their own lives interesting. Plays contribute to the happiness of people whose lives amount to something, because their creative faculties are roused in the theater. A man in love enjoys a *comédie d'amour* because it concerns his own life. A statesman at a performance of *Julius Caesar* dreams of his desk. But if the spectator role becomes permanent, if the spectator is not an actor in the drama of actual life, then boredom lies in wait for him and he is soon a prey to imaginary worries; endless self-examination, regret for the past which is beyond recall, and fears for the unknown future.

Many men, strangely enough, find a bitter and unhealthy pleasure in declaring that there are no remedies for these real and imaginary misfortunes. They enjoy their troubles; they treat with hostility those who

try to help them. Certainly, during the first few days of mourning the loss of someone, of some serious and undeserved misfortune, suffering is frequently beyond the reach of consolation. Friends can do no more than offer their wordless and patient sympathy.

But are we not all familiar with professional women mourners who do their utmost to maintain by outward show the sorrows that time should be allowed to efface? I pity those who attach themselves to a past that cannot be recalled, when their sorrow affects no one but themselves; but I greatly disapprove of them when, with their propaganda of despair, they hope to drag down younger or braver people who expect happiness from life.

This sort of behavior must be curbed. True suffering shows itself inevitably, even when efforts are made to hide it in order not to interfere with the happiness of others. I once saw, with a group of gay companions, a young woman who had been the chief character in a horrible tragedy; her silence, her hard-won smiles, and her unavoidable preoccupation betrayed her continually, but she courageously maintained a fictitious serenity which made her companions' enjoyment possible. If your memory cannot function without unnatural solitude and daily lamentations, it must already have lost its precision. The best way to honor friends who have died is to treat our living ones with equal affection.

But how are obsessions to be dealt with? What protection is there against these inexorable states of mind which possess us even in sleep? Nature offers the greatest and most easily enlisted. The sea, the mountains, and the woods have a calming effect because of the contrast between their grandeur and indifference and our own insignificance. Frequently, in our saddest moments, it is comforting to lie in the grass beneath the trees for a whole day of solitude. In our deepest sorrows there are always social obligations, and if we cut ourselves off from them for a time we shorten sail and are less vulnerable. This is why travel is such an effective remedy for mental suffering. If one remains in the atmosphere of one's misfortune, the obsession is continually revived and memories crowd closer. Travel is like casting off one's mooring.

Music is another world where a sufferer may take refuge. Music

possesses itself completely of the soul; it is often like a torrent that rushes through the mind, leaving it purified; or it is a summons, an evocation of our sufferings, which quickly and miraculously gives them their proper significance. For every phrase reminding us of them there is a corresponding one which soothes them; this wordless and unthinking dialogue, leading us to the final determination, is consoling. Music, its clear-cut rhythms marking the passage of time, disposes of our erroneous ideas of the permanence of mental anguish.

"I have never experienced a sorrow that an hour of reading would not soothe," is a much-used phrase and one that I do not altogether understand. I am unable to allay a real sorrow by reading, because I cannot in such circumstances fix my attention upon a book. Reading requires an unpreoccupied mind and I believe that it can play a useful role during a mental convalescence. An obsession can be got rid of only by the use of more definite actions which cannot be accompanied by inattention: writing, operating a delicate mechanism, walking up dangerous paths. Physical fatigue is healthy because it induces sleep.

"All that is useless," groans the expert in gloom. "Your remedies are weak and ineffective. Nothing can awaken my interest in life. Nothing can make me forget my sorrow."

How do you know this? Have you tried these remedies? At least make experiments before pronouncing upon their results. There are exercises which, though they cannot produce positive happiness, do prepare the way for it.

Avoid spending too much time in meditating upon the past. I do not mean that meditation is unwise. Almost every important decision should be preceded by meditation; if meditation concerns a definite object, it can do no harm. What is harmful is the endless turning over in the mind of some loss, some insult, some abuse; in short, something that cannot be remedied. "Do not cry over spilt milk," says the English proverb. Disraeli advises us never to explain and never to complain. Descartes said: "I have learned to check my desires and not to fight against the world's laws and to believe that what could not be accomplished was for me absolutely impossible." From time to time the mind must be cleansed and renewed. There is no happiness without

forgetfulness. I have never known of a real man of action to be unhappy during action. How could he be? Like a child at play, he stops thinking of himself.

Bertrand Russell says that when he reads his friends' books or listens to their talk he almost comes to the conclusion that happiness is impossible in the modern world. He finds, however, when he talks with his gardener, that this idea is absurd. The gardener looks after his tomatoes and his egg-plants; he knows his job and his garden perfectly, and he knows also that his crop will be a fine one; he is proud of it. Here we have one kind of happiness, the reward of every great artist, every creator. For intelligent people, action often means escape from thought, but it is a reasonable and a wise escape. "He who desires but does not act breeds corruption." One might also say: "He who thinks but does not act breeds corruption." Thought which leads nowhere is dangerous. The man of action is not disturbed by the contradictions of the universe and the complexities of life; he takes them as they come and the synthesis builds itself up. On the other hand, inaction regards the apparent incoherence of the universe as a matter for sorrow—a sorrow which is quite artificial. Action itself is not enough; one must act in harmony with the society of which one is a part. A permanent state of conflict wears one down and makes work difficult, sometimes impossible.

Choose a community to live in whose efforts lie in the same direction as your own and where there will be interest in your activities. Instead of living in conflict with your family, who in your opinion do not understand you, and, in the conflict, destroying your happiness and that of others, seek out friends who think as you do. If you are religious, live among believers; if you are a revolutionary, live among your own kind. You can still try to convince the skeptical, and in this you will have the support of those who are in agreement with you. It is wrongly held by many that to be happy one must have the admiration and respect of a great many people; but the esteem of one's own circle is essential. Stéphane Mallarmé, deeply beloved by a few disciples, was far happier than a celebrated man who knows that his reputation is questioned by those whom he admires. The monastery has brought

peace to innumerable souls through its singleness of thought and purpose.

Do not make yourself unhappy by imagining distant and unpredictable tragedies. Several days ago I encountered an unhappy man in the Tuileries Gardens with its gay children, its fountains, and its sunlight. He was walking beneath the trees, alone, melancholy, thinking about financial or military disasters which he said he expected within two years. "Are you mad?" I asked him. "Who the devil knows what will happen next year? Life is difficult and our peaceful moments are few, but the future will certainly not in any way resemble your gloomy forebodings. Enjoy the present. Imitate those children sailing their white-sailed boats on the pond. Do your duty and leave the rest to the Gods."

Obviously the future must be considered in the light of one's own power to influence events. The man of action cannot be a fatalist. The architect has to think of the future of the house he is building; a workman has to take measures for safeguarding his old age; a member of the Chamber has to consider the possible effects of the budget for which he is going to vote. But once decisions are made and measures taken, peace of mind must be re-established. It is absurd to try to foresee things when the means of doing it are lacking.

When one is already happy it is important not to lose the virtues which have produced happiness. When they are successful, many men and women forget prudence, moderation, and kindness—qualities which were instrumental in their success. They are arrogant or thoughtless; an excessive self-confidence prevents them from accomplishing difficult tasks, and they soon become unworthy of their good fortune. They are surprised when their luck changes from good to bad. The ancient practice of sacrifice to the gods in return for happiness was a wise one. Polycrates, Tyrant of Samos, threw his precious ring into the sea as a sacrifice, and there are several ways of throwing the ring of Polycrates into the sea. The simplest is to be modest.

These recipes for happiness have not been invented by us; they are well known and have been taught ever since the existence of philosophers who meditated. Those of antiquity, Stoic as well as Epicurean, advised submission to one's fate, moderate desires, and a life in harmony

with oneself. This was the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, of Montaigne; it is also that of the wise men of our own time.

"What?" exclaims the Anti-Sage (Nietzsche; Gide—but a Gide so complex that he is sometimes the Sage; and, in the younger generation, perhaps Malraux). "What? This acceptance of a vulgar, insipid fate? This insignificant happiness? This refusal to live a dangerous life? This resignation? Are these what you offer us? We do not want happiness; we want heroism."

"You are partly right, O Anti-Sage, and I shall try presently to show that happiness is not resignation, but joy. You are wrong if you think that wisdom is not itself a heroic struggle. Submission to events which have no connection with our actions does imply giving in to ourselves. We accept the sea and its storms, the crowd and its passions, man and his struggles, the body and its needs, because these are the elements of the problem; if we did not accept them our discourse would concern a shadowy, imaginary world. We believe in our ability to change the world in some slight way, to steer a ship in a storm, to dominate a crowd, and above all to transform ourselves. We cannot eliminate all the causes of sickness, defeat, or humiliation (nor can you), but we can make of sickness, defeat, and humiliation occasions for victory and the acquisition of tranquillity."

"Man does not aspire to happiness," says Nietzsche, "only Englishmen do that." And elsewhere: "I do not want happiness; I want to do my work." But why cannot one seek happiness while doing one's work? Happiness is neither comfort, nor the search for pleasure, nor laziness. The sternest of philosophers seek happiness like all men, but in their own fashion.

Wisdom is only the first stage of the journey toward happiness. It prepares the way by ridding the mind of useless torment. It silences useless discussion of the most insignificant emotions. When this mission is fulfilled, happiness can exist. But what will this happiness be like? I am sure that it is a mingling of love and the joy of creation, that is, self-forgetfulness. Love and joy can take widely varying forms, beginning with the love of two humans for one another and ending with the love of humanity which is so well described by the poets.



He who has not spent hours, days, or years with someone he loves cannot know what happiness is, for he is unable to imagine a protracted miracle like this—one makes out of ordinary sights and events the most enchanted existence. Stendhal is one of the men who have best understood the similarity between happiness and love, and I call attention here to an admirable passage in *La Chartreuse de Parme*, describing Fabrice's happiness in the prison at Parma. He is in grave danger of death, but what does this matter when his days are illuminated by the brief appearances of Clélia? He is happy.

What loving a woman does for a young man like Fabrice, maternal love does for a mother, love of his colleagues for a leader, love of his work for an artist, and the love of God for a saint. The moment we succeed in forgetting ourselves entirely, the moment we lose ourselves, due to some mystical impulse, in some other existence, we find ourselves; and the events which do not concern this other existence become unimportant. "An unsatisfied woman requires luxury, but a woman who is in love with a man will lie on a board."

It is true that in thus giving his love to fragile beings man becomes more vulnerable. He who passionately loves a woman, children, or his country gives hostages to fortune. He will be tortured from then on, though he be in good health, put down though he be powerful, forced to ask for mercy though he be courageous and hardened to suffering. Fortune has him in her grasp. He is forced to watch with burning anxiety the sickness of those he loves tenderly—a suffering far worse than that caused by any malady of his own, because his physical powers are intact. He wants to help but feels utterly useless. He would like to surrender himself instead of his precious hostages, and sickness—arrogant and tyrannical—chooses its victims relentlessly. In spite of himself he feels like a coward and a traitor, because he has escaped. This is the cruelest of all human torments.

What becomes of our Stoical wisdom now? Would it not tell us that it is madness to involve our destinies so closely with those of fragile human beginnings? Did not Montaigne refuse to take the affairs of his fellow citizens into his liver and lungs? Yes, but Montaigne himself suffered when the victim was La Boétie. It cannot be denied that this conflict

exists; and Christian wisdom is more profound than Stoical wisdom, because it takes this into account. The only perfect solution would be to place one's affections only where one may be sure of constancy. From this comes the lasting and intangible happiness of sincerely religious people. But human instinct involves us with human beings. Wisdom is no less to be prized in the many cases where real love is not concerned. It rids us of imagined misfortune; it banishes useless apprehension; it maintains a healthy distrust of sufferings which are nothing but words.

One of the most serious obstacles to happiness is the awkwardness of modern man, with his mind full of doctrines and abstract formulas, when he attempts to re-establish contact with real emotions. Animals and unsophisticated people achieve happiness more naturally, because their desires are simpler and truer. Civilized man, a parrot enslaved by his chattering, ceaselessly inoculates himself with loves and hatreds which he does not actually feel.

In this disorder from which spring so many imaginary misfortunes, the artist can help us to recapture real emotions better than the philosopher. Mystical knowledge alone, whether it be of art, love, or religion, gets at the essence of things; it alone brings stability, peace and happiness. The artist who tries to capture the beauty of a landscape and whose gaze seems to dart out toward it in order that he may not miss a single detail knows perfect happiness while he is working. In his *Christmas Carol*, Dickens shows how a wretched, egotistical old man finds happiness, until then beyond his comprehension, because he allows himself to become fond of several people and through them is able to cast off his worst fault. Whenever we catch a fleeting glimpse of the extraordinary unity of the universe; when the motionless hills, the rustling trees, the swallows darting across the sky, and the insect crawling upon the windowpane suddenly become a part of our life and our life a part of the world about us, then we are aware, in a flash of intuition, of that love of the universe so greatly surpassing submission to it, which is expressed in the Hymn to Joy.

"Do you wish to know the secret of happiness?" Several years ago in the agony column of the London *Times* this question was asked, and all those who replied received an envelope containing two verses from

Saint Matthew: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Such, actually, is the secret of happiness, and the ancients had the same idea in another form when they declared that Hope was left at the bottom of Pandora's box when all the evils had taken flight. He who seeks love shall find it; he who devotes himself unreservedly to friendship shall have friends; only the man who desires happiness with his whole heart shall find it.

Early in life we put questions in an unanswerable form: "How am I to find the perfect man who deserves my love, or the unfailing friend who deserves my confidence? Where can laws be found which will assure the peace and happiness of my country? Where and in what occupation am I to achieve happiness myself?" No one can reply to those who state their problems in this way.

What are the questions that should be asked? "Where am I to find a person with weaknesses like my own, but with whom, thanks to our good intentions, a shelter from the world and its changes may be erected? What are the hard-won virtues necessary to a nation's existence? To what work can I devote my time and strength, thus forgetting my fears and regrets with the help of discipline? Finally, what sort of happiness shall I be able to achieve, and by whose love?"

There is no permanent equilibrium in human affairs. Faith, wisdom, and art allow one to attain it for a time; then outside influences and the soul's passions destroy it, and one must climb the rock again in the same manner. This vacillation round a fixed point is life, and the certainty that such a point exists is happiness. As the most ardent love, if one analyzes its separate moments, is made up of innumerable minute conflicts settled invariably by fidelity, so happiness, if one reduces it to its important elements, is made up of struggles and anguish, and always saved by hope.

\*❖\*❖\*❖\*  
*Unselfish Love*  
\*❖\*❖\*❖\*

THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1743-1826

Third President of the United States, and  
author of the Declaration of Independence

*Head:* The art of life is the art of avoiding pain; and he is the best pilot, who steers clearest of the rocks and shoals with which it is beset. Pleasure is always before us; but misfortune is at our side: while running after that, this arrests us. The most effectual means of being secure against pain, is to retire within ourselves, and to suffice for our own happiness. Those which depend on ourselves, are the only pleasures a wise man will count on: for nothing is ours, which another may deprive us of. Hence the inestimable value of intellectual pleasures. Ever in our power, always leading us to something new, never cloying, we ride serene and sublime above the concerns of this mortal world, contemplating truth and nature, matter and motion, the laws which bind up their existence, and that Eternal Being who made and bound them up by those laws. Let this be our employ. Leave the bustle and tumult of society to those who have not talents to occupy themselves without them. Friendship is but another name for an alliance with the follies and the misfortunes of others. Our own share of miseries is sufficient: why enter then as volunteers into those of another? Is there little gall poured into our cup, that we must need help to drink that of our neighbor? A friend dies, or leaves us: we feel as if a limb were cut off. He is sick: we must watch over him, and participate of his pains. His fortune is shipwrecked: ours must be laid under contribution. He loses a child, a parent, or a partner: we must mourn the loss as if it were our own.

*Heart:* And what more sublime delight than to mingle tears with one whom the hand of heaven hath smitten! To watch over the bed of sick-

ness, and to beguile its tedious and its painful moments! To share our bread with one to whom misfortune has left none! This world abounds indeed with misery; to lighten its burden, we must divide it with one another. But let us now try the virtue of your mathematical balance, and as you have put into one scale the burdens of friendship, let me put its comforts into the other. When languishing then under disease, how grateful is the solace of our friends! how are we penetrated with their assiduities and attentions! how much are we supported by their encouragements and kind offices! When heaven has taken from us some object of our love, how sweet is it to have a bosom whereon to recline our heads, and into which we may pour the torrent of our tears! Grief, with such a comfort, is almost a luxury! In a life, where we are perpetually exposed to want and accident, yours is a wonderful proposition, to insulate ourselves, to retire from all aid, and to wrap ourselves in the mantle of self-sufficiency! For, assuredly, nobody will care for him who cares for nobody. But friendship is precious, not only in the shade, but in the sunshine of life; and thanks to a benevolent arrangement of things, the greater part of life is sunshine. I will recur for proof to the days we have lately passed. On these, indeed, the sun shone brightly. How gay did the face of nature appear! Hills, valleys, châteaux, gardens, rivers, every object wore its liveliest hue! Whence did they borrow it? From the presence of our charming companion. They were pleasing, because she seemed pleased. Alone, the scene would have been dull and insipid; the participation of it with her gave it relish. Let the gloomy monk, sequestered from the world, seek unsocial pleasures in the bottom of his cell! Let the sublimated philosopher grasp visionary happiness, while pursuing phantoms dressed in the garb of truth! Their supreme wisdom is supreme folly; and they mistake for happiness the mere absence of pain. Had they ever felt the solid pleasure of one generous spasm of the heart, they would exchange for it all the frigid speculations of their lives, which you have been vaunting in such elevated terms. Believe me, then, my friend, that that is a miserable arithmetic which could estimate friendship at nothing, or at less than nothing. Respect for you has induced me to enter into this discussion, and to hear principles uttered which I detest and abjure. Respect for myself now obliges

me to recall you into the proper limits of your office. When nature assigned us the same habitation, she gave us over it a divided empire. To you, she allotted the field of science; to me, that of morals. When the circle is to be squared, or the orbit of a comet to be traced; when the arch of greatest strength, or the solid of least resistance, is to be investigated, take up the problem; it is yours; nature has given me no cognizance of it. In like manner, in denying to you the feelings of sympathy, of benevolence, of gratitude, of justice, of love, of friendship, she has excluded you from their control. To these, she has adapted the mechanism of the heart. Morals were too essential to the happiness of man, to be risked on the uncertain combinations of the head. She laid their foundation, therefore, in sentiment, not in science.

### CHARLES FRANCIS POTTER, 1885-

American clergyman and author

THERE HAVE COME into my office from time to time various people who are unhappy, yet who have absolutely nothing the matter with them according to the usual tests. Their health is good, their sexual life normal, their financial condition satisfactory, their work interesting and significant, but still they are unhappy. For a while they had me baffled, then I realized that they were worried about growing old.

It is not really so bad with the women as with the men, although you might think the opposite. The women, most of them, have learned the art of growing old gracefully. You may rail at cosmetics and beauty treatments all you wish, but their enormous popularity indicates that they have filled a real need. They are the tangible means whereby a woman fends off the ravages of the years.

I get considerable amusement on the side watching how different women meet the challenge of approaching age. There is no stage drama

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half so interesting. In my earlier pastorates, the women trusted in God. Now, they keep their powder dry. Yes, and their rouge and lip-stick handy. But both methods are really necessary. This fight requires spiritual and material weapons.

Growing old gracefully really depends most on an effective shifting of physical and emotional years. This necessitates a realization that every period of life has its rich compensations, and that only a fool fails to enjoy those of the period he is living in, because they are not the same as those of a past period. Personally, I think the achievement of happiness becomes easier as one grows older. Youth is so full of doubts and fears and needs that harass and worry constantly, but which happily largely disappear with the passing years.

I realize that how to slow down is the hardest lesson for men of energy to learn. "Drive, drive, drive," is the slogan of many American men. They fear to let up, lest it be interpreted as a confession of weakness. They claim they are seeking to amass a fortune and retire. But, if and when they do retire, they do not know what to do with themselves.

Happiness at the end of life demands some preparation beforehand. An assured income is not enough with which to meet old age. One must accumulate friends. One must lay up reserves of mental pleasures. One must plan for the health that is so extremely important to happiness in this period.

By the time a man is sixty he should be well enough acquainted with himself to know what he can and cannot do. He should know the varieties of self-expression which bring him the most happiness and should have attained some little skill in them. He should have a pretty good knowledge of how much he can expect of his body and of what his mental and spiritual capacities are.

Of the three watchwords for the happiness hunter,—self-recognition, self-direction, and self-expression, it is the last that is most important for the graying years. The others also have their place in the sixties and seventies, but in not such a prominent place as before. Self-expression is the field to cultivate for later happiness. Then a man or a woman has more to express. Life begins at forty, yes, and it begins at sixty sometimes and even later. When all seems disappointing, when a review of

one's life reveals no one great thing done, the man who takes inventory and devotes himself for some weeks and months to self-examination, may discover some neglected element which when brought out into its proper place may transform his life. Some desire he had in boyhood which got buried because of other interests may suddenly appear again. It may prove to have been his true bent, his real calling, and even the man of sixty, perhaps especially the man of sixty, ripened and strengthened by life experience, may take this boyhood ambition and in a surprisingly short time find himself doing more with the thing than he could have as a boy.

The technique of happiness for the elderly person is somewhat different from that for the youthful, but too much has been made of the difference between youth and old age. The human personality changes through the years, it is true, and yet it strangely remains the same. We have many second chances in life, sometimes even tenth chances. Let no man give up hope till the last breath is drawn.

Elderly people constantly surprise me. In my pastoral experience I have made many calls upon elderly shut-ins, where I have gone to bring encouragement and some little measure of comfort to their declining years. Almost invariably as I have gone down the steps of their home after the visit I have said to myself, "It is I who have received new strength." There is something in the human spirit which enables it to overcome the infirmities and disappointments of old age and to bring a benediction of courage to those of a younger greener growth.

Just when we think that the inertia of matter has triumphed and that the individual is declining through second childhood back to the womb of mother earth, there frequently comes a resurrection of the spirit of man, and in his seventies or eighties he produces some great work which enriches humankind.

Very few persons nowadays appear to fear death itself, whereas formerly many did. I attribute this decrease in the fear of dying to the fact that preachers of today do not hold to the preaching of the horrors of death, hell, and damnation as did their predecessors. The decline of Calvinism has brought a saner view of our passing from this world. We find modern ministers referring to death as just "entering another room



of God's house," or as "beginning the great adventure."

As a matter of fact, if people are not deliberately frightened by theological fanatics, they are not naturally much afraid of death. Except for the very old, they do not think very much about death at all, and do not expect to die. In my experience with dying persons, most of them do not realize they are dying until the very end, and then they do not seem to care. During an influenza epidemic, I volunteered to work as an orderly in a large Boston hospital. As soon as they discovered that I was a clergyman, the physicians assigned me as one of my duties the task of telling the dying that their end was near. But not one of them would believe me!

I remember in particular a very lovely girl whom I had to tell at nine o'clock one evening that she would be dead by morning. She smiled, and thanked me, but I could see that she did not believe what I said. I got word to her family, but none of them would come near the hospital. Her affianced lover did come, however, and told me the next morning that when he had arrived at twelve, she had said to him, "A nice young minister was here this evening and tried to tell me that I was dying. But, you know, dear, it is only a bad cold, and I will soon be well, and we will build that house we are planning, and be very happy together all our lives." Three hours later she was dead.

Old people seem to know when they are about to die, but it appears to worry them little in most cases. Many of them welcome it, not particularly because of disappointment with life, but as a tired man welcomes his pillow at night. Nature supplies her own anodyne to the dying. As the body gradually sinks, the mind eases itself down to rest.

It may seem a strange thing to say, but I really believe that most people, whether devoutly religious or not, die happy and at ease. Death is a most merciful surgeon, and when he comes to cut the thread of life, he brings his ether with him. The horrors of death exist mostly in the minds of the theologians.

It is the ones who are left behind who suffer.

The hardest of all tasks for a minister is to console those who have lost a loved one in death. I know no more beautiful or heartening words than those offered by Gautama the Buddha, the great prophet of the

East, to the mother who came to him with her dead child in her arms. She said,

"Lord Buddha, heal my child."

Buddha looked at the infant and saw that it was dead. With infinite sympathy he told her, "Yes, woman, I can cure your child. Go to yonder village and gather me some grains of mustard seed from a mustard plant growing in the yard of a home where never yet death has come."

The woman departed and some hours later returned saying, "Lord Buddha, I understand. I had thought that I was the only mother who had ever lost a child. But now I realize that there is no home that death has never visited. Give me leave to bury my little one, and then I will follow thee."

Many years ago I adopted a plan which has brought fine results. When someone comes to me who is sorely troubled, I try to send him to a person who has faced and overcome the same crisis. In this person who has recovered, the sufferer finds a friend who understands and is eager to help. Nothing any minister can say can compare with the testimony of someone who has met trouble or been stricken by sorrow and has triumphed over them. Some very warm friendships have resulted from this practice. There seems to be a peculiar quality of rare sweetness which is developed when two human beings who have faced the same difficulty join in an association of mutual helpfulness.

This realization that our sufferings are not unique, that we are not alone in facing grief, that others, too, have great burdens, and often greater ones than ours, has frequently brought great solace to sufferers otherwise inconsolable, and has sometimes been the deciding factor in a shattered soul's desire to live.

When I had a church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, the example of Buddha proved an infinite boon to me. I came to my congregation in February, 1914, just before the Great War. Edmonton had not long been settled, and was a prosperous new community, consisting largely of young married couples. Within six months after the declaration of war no less than twenty thousand young men enlisted in Edmonton, which had a total population of seventy-two thousand souls, establishing, in proportion to population, a record for the cities of the world.

Suddenly my congregation was virtually reduced to only women, and very soon those women came in black. The men who had so quickly volunteered for their country had been sent to the front to stem the first onrush of the enemy, and they were literally decimated. Of the eleven hundred thirty splendid six-footers in the crack Princess Pat regiment that I saw leave our city, only sixty-five were left alive at the end of a few tragic weeks.

Daily, weeping wives came to me with their heart-rending cries. "I won't ever see him again!" I gave them what words of comfort I could, until I found one woman who had triumphed over her grief. I then sent the next bereaved woman to her. And when she, too, had found peace, I made her the consoler of another sufferer. Soon we had a group of women who sought and found comfort in and with each other, and their friendship was a beautiful thing to see.

So, I believe with all my heart, after twenty-five and more years in the ministry, that we have within us untold powers to help ourselves and others to happiness.

Jesus knew what was in man. He believed in man. He believed in the infinite possibilities of the human soul.

He told a dozen of the commonest sort of folk that the kingdom of heaven was within them. And those twelve men went forth and transformed the world.

### MANU c. 200 B.C.

In Hindu legend, the father of mankind, and supposed author of the *Laws of Manu*, the chief work of Brahman doctrine, probably written between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100

He who is persevering, gentle and patient, who shuns men of evil conduct, who does no injury, is self-controlled and liberal—he who is of such conduct, obtains heavenly bliss. He attains to endless happiness who

desires not to cause the sufferings of bonds or death to living beings, but desires the good of all.

### MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO, 106-43 B.C.

Celebrated Roman orator, famous also as a  
statesman and a philosopher

THIS THEREFORE CLEARLY appears, that intense mental pleasure or distress contributes more to our happiness or misery than a bodily pleasure or pain of equal duration. But we do not agree that when pleasure is withdrawn uneasiness at once ensues, unless the pleasure happens to have been replaced by a pain; while on the other hand one is glad to lose a pain even though no active sensation of pleasure comes in its place: a fact that serves to show how great a pleasure is the mere absence of pain. But just as we are elated by the anticipation of good things, so we are delighted by their recollection. Fools are tormented by the memory of former evils: wise men have the delight of renewing in grateful remembrance the blessings of the past. We have the power both to obliterate our misfortunes in an almost perpetual forgetfulness and to summon up pleasant and agreeable memories of our successes. But when we fix our mental vision closely on the events of the past, then sorrow or gladness ensues according as these were evil or good.

Here is indeed a royal road to happiness—open, simple and direct! For clearly man can have no greater good than complete freedom from pain and sorrow coupled with the enjoyment of the highest bodily and mental pleasures. Notice then how the theory embraces every possible enhancement of life, every aid to the attainment of that Chief Good which is our object. Epicurus, the man whom you denounce as a voluptuary, cries aloud that no one can live pleasantly without living wisely, honourably and justly, and no one wisely, honourably and justly without living pleasantly. For a city rent by faction cannot prosper, nor a house whose masters are at strife; much less then can a mind divided against

itself and filled with inward discord taste any particle of pure and liberal pleasure. But one who is perpetually swayed by conflicting and incompatible counsels and desires can know no peace or calm. Why, if the pleasantness of life is diminished by the more serious bodily diseases, how much more must it be diminished by the diseases of the mind! But extravagant and imaginary desires, for riches, fame, power, and also for licentious pleasures, are nothing but mental disease. Then, too, there are grief, trouble and sorrow, which gnaw the heart and consume it with anxiety, if men fail to realize that the mind need feel no pain unconnected with some pain of body, present or to come. Yet there is no foolish man but is afflicted by some one of these diseases; therefore there is no foolish man that is not unhappy. Moreover, there is death, the stone of Tantalus ever hanging over men's heads; and superstition, that poisons and destroys all peace of mind. Besides, they do not recollect their past nor enjoy their present blessings; they merely look forward to those of the future, and as these are of necessity uncertain, they are consumed with agony and terror; and the climax of their torment is when they perceive too late that all their dreams of wealth or station, power or fame, have come to nothing. For they never attain any of the pleasures, the hope of which inspired them to undergo all their arduous toils. Or look again at others, petty, narrow-minded men, or confirmed pessimists, or spiteful, envious, ill-tempered creatures, unsociable, abusive, brutal; others again enslaved to the follies of love, impudent or reckless, wanton, headstrong and yet irresolute, always changing their minds. Such failings render their lives one unbroken round of misery. The conclusion is that no foolish man can be happy, nor any wise man fail to be happy. This is a truth that we establish far more conclusively than do the Stoics. For they maintain that nothing is good save that vague phantom which they entitle Moral Worth, a title more splendid than substantial; and say that Virtue resting on this Moral Worth has no need of pleasure, but is herself her own sufficient happiness.

At the same time this Stoic doctrine can be stated in a form which we do not object to, and indeed ourselves endorse. For Epicurus thus presents his Wise Man who is always happy; his desires are kept within bounds; death he disregards; he has a true conception, untainted by fear,

of the Divine Nature; he does not hesitate to depart from life, if that would better his condition. Thus equipped he enjoys perpetual pleasure, for there is no moment when the pleasures he experiences do not outbalance the pains; since he remembers the past with gratitude, grasps the present with a full realization of its pleasantness, and does not rely upon the future; he looks forward to it, but finds his true enjoyment in the present. Also he is entirely free from the vices that I instanced a few moments ago, and he derives no inconsiderable pleasure from comparing his own existence with the life of the foolish. Moreover, any pains that the Wise Man may encounter are never so severe but that he has more cause for gladness than for sorrow. Again, it is a fine saying of Epicurus that "the Wise Man is but little interfered with by fortune: the great concerns of life, the things that matter, are controlled by his own wisdom and reason"; and that "no greater pleasure could be derived from a life of infinite duration than is actually afforded by this existence which we know to be finite." Logic, on which your school lays such stress, he held to be of no effect either as a guide to conduct or as an aid to thought.

There remains a topic that is pre-eminently germane to this discussion, I mean the subject of Friendship. Your school maintains that if pleasure be the Chief Good, friendship will cease to exist. Now Epicurus's pronouncement about friendship is that of all the means to happiness that wisdom has devised, none is greater, none more fruitful, none more delightful than this. Nor did he only commend this doctrine by his eloquence, but far more by the example of his life and conduct. How great a thing such friendship is, is shown by the mythical stories of antiquity. Review the legends from the remotest ages, and, copious and varied as they are, you will barely find in them three pairs of friends, beginning with Theseus and ending with Orestes. Yet Epicurus in a single house and that a small one maintained a whole company of friends, united by the closest sympathy and affection; and this still goes in the Epicurean school. But to return to our subject, for there is no need of personal instances: I notice that the topic of friendship has been treated by Epicureans in three ways: (1) Some have denied that pleasures affecting our friends are in themselves to be desired by us in the same degree as we desire our own pleasures. This doctrine is thought by some critics to

undermine the foundations of friendship; however, its supporters defend their position, and in my opinion have no difficulty in making good their ground. They argue that friendship can no more be sundered from pleasure than can the virtues, which we have discussed already. A solitary, friendless life must be beset by secret dangers and alarms. Hence reason itself advises the acquisition of friends; their possession gives confidence, and a firmly rooted hope of winning pleasure. And just as hatred, jealousy and contempt are hindrances to pleasure, so friendship is the most trustworthy preserver and also creator of pleasure alike for our friends and for ourselves. It affords us enjoyment in the present, and it inspires us with hopes for the near and distant future. Thus it is not possible to secure uninterrupted gratification in life without friendship, nor yet to preserve friendship itself unless we love our friends as much as ourselves. Hence this unselfishness does occur in friendship, while also friendship is closely linked with pleasure. For we rejoice in our friends' joy as much as in our own, and are equally pained by their sorrows. Therefore the Wise Man will feel exactly the same toward his friend as he does toward himself, and will exert himself as much for his friend's pleasure as he would for his own. All that has been said about the essential connexion of the virtues with pleasure must be repeated about friendship. Epicurus well said (I give almost his exact words): "The same creed that has given us courage to overcome all fear of everlasting or long-enduring evil hereafter, has discerned that friendship is our strongest safeguard in this present term of life."

(2) Other Epicureans though by no means lacking in insight are a little less courageous in defying the opprobrious criticisms of the Academy. They fear that if we hold friendship to be desirable only for the pleasure that it affords to ourselves, it will be thought that it is crippled altogether. They therefore say that the first advances and overtures, and the original inclination to form an attachment, are prompted by the desire for pleasure, but that when the progress of intercourse has led to intimacy, the relationship blossoms into an affection strong enough to make us love our friends for their own sake, even though no practical advantage accrues from their friendship. Does not familiarity endear to us localities, temples, cities, gymnasia and playing grounds, horses and

hounds, gladiatorial shows and fights with wild beasts? Then how much more natural and reasonable that this should be able to happen in our intercourse with our fellow-men!

(3) The third view is that wise men have made a sort of compact to love their friends no less than themselves. We can understand the possibility of this, and we often see it happen. Clearly no more effective means to happiness could be found than such an alliance.

All these considerations go to prove not only that the theory of friendship is not embarrassed by the identification of the Chief Good with pleasure, but also that without this no foundation for friendship whatsoever can be found.

### MOHAMMED, 570(?)–632

The Prophet of Islam, one of the most important figures of history

O YE WHO believe! Fear God. Desire union with Him. Contend earnestly on His path, that ye may attain to happiness. O men! Now hath an admonition come unto you from your Lord, a remedy for the doubts which are in your breasts, and a direction and mercy unto the true believers. Through the grace of God and His mercy let them rejoice therein. This will be better than what they heap together of worldly riches. Saith the Lord: "When We cause men to taste mercy, they rejoice in it." No soul knoweth what joy is reserved for the good in recompense of their works. Saith the Lord: "As to him who giveth alms, and feareth God, and yieldeth assent to the good—to him will We make easy the path to happiness."



## HENRY C. LINK, 1889-

American psychologist and author

"PERSONALITY WAS ONCE regarded as an indefinable something which certain people had and others lacked. Now we have discovered that personality can be developed by training, just as the mind can. By personality we mean the extent to which one is able to interest and influence other people. This ability to influence other people is made up of habits and skills acquired by practice."

This quotation is from an article in which I described the P.Q. or personality quotient psychologists now use to test the elements of one's personality. Since then 50 psychologists have cooperated in extending this study, and the results are confirming, on a nation-wide scale, those described in the previous article. The development of personality, we find, depends on learning to do an increasing number of things with and for other people.

As our personality expands, our happiness also expands. Personality consists of how we feel as a result. Emerson said: "Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself." Happiness is no more elusive or intangible than is personality. It is not a gift, or an accident; it is something we create. The P.Q., in measuring personality, at the same time measures happiness. Both can be raised by effort and practice, but only on one condition: the things we do must be such as to help and please others, even though we have to sacrifice our own desires in the act! Moreover, these efforts cannot be made on a cash-register basis. Only as we use our ingenuity and energies to give happiness to others regardless of reward may we achieve happiness ourselves.

Recently I asked a man who had been with the A.E.F. in France:

"A Workable Cue to Happiness and Personality" by Henry C. Link. Reprinted by permission of *The Reader's Digest* and the author.

"What experience stands out most vividly?" I expected some dramatic story of bloodshed but, after a brief hesitation, he said: "One night I arrived on leave in Paris, eager for a good meal and my first glimpse of the city. Alighting from the train was an old lady, poorly dressed, struggling with three heavy bags. As there were no porters available I helped the woman to the subway. Then, unable to see how she could possibly manage those bags, I got on the train with her, and went right to her home far out in the suburbs. Although I could not talk French, never have I seen such spontaneous gratitude. She insisted that I accompany her to a neighborhood café where she bought me a bottle of beer, exclaiming meanwhile to everyone in the place what the American dough-boy had done. Whereupon, amid handshaking and felicitations, they all drank a toast. If I had saved the woman's life they could scarcely have made a greater fuss over me. A simple enough incident, yet what I've never forgotten was the satisfying thrill I got out of it."

Many of us are afraid to venture any unusual attention to people in fear of being misunderstood. Indeed, it is amazing how many reasons we can give to justify our habits of behavior. The secret of a growing personality and happiness is the determination to form new habits and to embark on new adventures. Of course we shall make mistakes and meet rebuffs, until we acquire the necessary skills and finesse. But the person who, because of fear, stops trying new approaches to people, will never expand his understanding or love of people, and his happiness, instead of growing, will shrink.

Even small attentions are not easily cultivated. People who remember the birthdays of their relatives and friends, for example, tend to have better personalities than those who do not. Yet, how hard it is for most of us to remember birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and occasions which mean much to someone else. Remembering such occasions is a habit which can be acquired only if we put forth the necessary effort.

"The sweetest music in the world to another person is the sound of his own name," says Dale Carnegie. And yet how often we see the postman, the elevator man, the garage man, without ever greeting them by name. The ability to remember the names of others, our test shows, is an important factor in the growth of personality. This ability is not an

accident but the result of practice. You may ask why you should clutter up your mind with the names of persons who mean little to you. The answer is that if we do not try to remember the names of such people, we are likely to forget the names of those whom we do want to remember. If we are not interested in all kinds of people, then our interest in the few we choose is likely to be less effective.

Walking along country roads one is impressed with the friendliness of rural folk. But in the crowded cities we sometimes see the same persons several times a week for years, without learning anything whatever about them. We have a limited circle of friends who mean something to us, but we lose touch with *genus homo*, or man as man.

We pay taxes to support the needy, but harden our hearts toward individuals in need. In our own communities, we are perfectly willing to let the politicians, who fatten on human misery, dole out our money so that we may be spared the sight of suffering. We may go to church, believing in a God of Love, and in the commandment: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; but there is no love of man in our hearts.

Even in our own families we often fall into a routine and mechanical attitude toward each other. The father, upon his arrival, is often greeted with greater affection by the dog than by his own children. For that matter, he may greet the dog with more enthusiasm than he greets his family. At breakfast or dinner he may be so absorbed in the news of the great world, that the news of his family world becomes an intrusion. Friendship and understanding in the family depend on personal sacrifices and special attentions just as they do everywhere else.

A woman of 58, employed in a bank, told us one day about the terrific fits of depression from which she suffered at intervals. When these spells came upon her, she was totally unfit for duties. We found that this woman had a very small circle of acquaintances. About many employes in her bank, with some of whom she had worked for years, she knew almost nothing. We advised her to learn something about the people who served her, their work, their families. When last heard from, she had become so involved in helping two families that her letter was entirely about them, with little reference to herself. Having become actively involved in their troubles she had less energy to devote to her own trouble. Having

given herself to others, she no longer needed to get away from herself. In helping others to achieve happiness, she was beginning to find it for herself.

There are numerous self-respecting men and women who serve us daily, yet we know them only subconsciously and the families they represent not at all. If the postman's wife were dying, it would mean nothing to us. If the youth who delivers our groceries had broken his leg, we might finally notice that there was a new man. If the newspaper boy was delivering his papers with holes in his shoes or in threadbare clothes, the thought of his needy family would seldom occur to us. If the elevator operator failed to stop at our floor, we might speak to him sharply, never thinking that he was worrying about a sick child.

In recent years most of us have become full of the new social consciousness. We often favor grand schemes which will give the average man a better deal. And yet, here is society at our very doors. While we read about the new social order in America, the social order of our personal contacts remains the same. While we acquire new theories of society at large, our habit of indifference toward society at home remains unchanged. Our ideas may have changed but our actions remain stagnant. Our minds may have improved, but our P.Q. has remained stationary or even deteriorated.

A woman, typical of many, complained that she had many acquaintances but could not seem to make close friends. This woman was charming in appearance, had adequate means. Her difficulty, we found, was the common difficulty, namely that she confined her exertions only to certain persons she thought worth cultivating. In short, she was interested in people, not for their sake but for her sake. She was concerned not with what she could do for others but what they could do for her. Instead of pouring out happiness generously, she was sprinkling drops at carefully chosen points.

More far-reaching was the experience of a couple who lost their only child, a beautiful child of 16. Instead of resigning themselves to a life of grief and withering retrospect, they soon adopted two small children. Through this experience, the mother became interested in finding suitable homes for homeless children. Her whole life has been given

added meaning and power because, having achieved new happiness in adopting two children, she is now helping to spread this happiness to others.

Whether our acts of consideration for others be large or small, the principle is the same. A woman shopper who treats a salesgirl as a human being not only creates an area of happiness in that girl's day, but incidentally receives preferred attention and service which makes shopping more pleasant for herself.

Here is a fundamental study in the art of social intercourse. Here is a religion, not of abstract faith but of human fellowship. Here is a concept of personality in the making. Here is happiness to be had for the giving.

If we were to make the conscious and frequent effort of treating others with consideration, the effects on us and on society as a whole would be amazing. Not only our personalities but the personality of the nation would rise to a much higher level, and with it, happiness. Here is the homely road, the human road, probably the only road by which we shall achieve that abundant life which all desire.



# A Contented Spirit



VYĀSA, c. 200 B.C.

Hindu poet and prophet to whom is attributed the *Mahābhārata*, the Sanskrit epic

HE WHOSE SPIRIT is not attached to external objects attains the happiness that is in the spirit. He whose spirit is joined in devotion to the Supreme enjoys the happiness that is imperishable. He whose joy is within, whose delight is within, he whose light likewise is within—that devotee, becoming one with the Supreme, attains unto the bliss of the Supreme. Supreme happiness comes to the devotee whose heart is at rest, in whom passion is tranquillized, who is one with the Supreme, and free from sin.

He knows the boundless joy which is beyond the senses, which the mind apprehends; and, fixed therein, never wavers from the truth. Having obtained it, he thinks, “No other acquisition is superior to this.” Abiding therein, he is not moved even by a heavy affliction. Ever thus uniting his soul to the Supreme, the devotee who has ceased from sin enjoys easily the boundless happiness of union with the Supreme.

Saith the Lord: “I am the Generator of all. All evolves from Me. Understanding thus, the wise adore Me in rapt emotion. They are content and joyful, mindful of Me, their life hidden in Me, illumining each other, ever conversing about Me.” He who, setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures, follows the impulse of desire, attains neither perfection nor happiness nor the highest goal. That illustrious Being, though dwelling in the heart, cannot be seen by the eye. He who knows Him, becomes wise and full of joy. Enjoy thou the prosperity of others, although thyself unprosperous. Noble men take pleasure in their neighbors’ happiness.

Happiness is desirable. It is an attribute of the soul. Both virtue and profit are sought for it. Virtue is its origin; the end, the attainment of

happiness. The wise become happy by renouncing that desire which the feeble-minded cannot abandon, and which grows not old with the aged. But the love of wealth and life is never gratified. Therefore I shall renounce enjoyments of sins, and devote myself to the culture of spiritual truths.

### SIR THOMAS BROWNE, 1605-82

English physician and author, best known for his confession of faith, *Religio Medici*

THAT WHEREIN GOD Himself is happy, the holy Angels are happy, in whose defect the Devils are unhappy, that dare I call happiness: whatsoever conduceth unto this, may with an easy Metaphor deserve that name; whatsoever else the World terms Happiness, is to me a story out of Pliny, a tale of Boccacio or Malizspini, an apparition, or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of Happiness than the name. Bless me in this life with but peace of my Conscience, command of my affections, the love of Thy self and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Caesar. These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth; wherein I set no rule or limit to Thy Hand or Providence. Dispose of me according to the wisdom of Thy pleasure: Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.

### CHANNING POLLOCK, 1880-1946

American writer and dramatist

MY MOTHER USED to say that she had never really hated anyone, except a man who, on her first voyage, was almost the only passenger aboard who

From *The Adventures of a Happy Man*, by Channing Pollock. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, publishers. Reprinted by permission. Copyright 1939, 1945 by Channing Pollock.

wasn't seasick. "He was a kind man," my mother said, "but, when he sat on my deck-chair and told me how he enjoyed the motion, and why I needn't be ill if I didn't give in, I decided I could stand anything that would lay him in his berth for the rest of the trip."

That's human. When I had stood two acts of Pollyanna's gladness, I went out into the night looking for a chance to assault a blind beggar. If I had lost my legs, and that dreadful child had told me I should be delighted, because now I could "sit down all the time," I'm afraid I should have made her sitting temporarily difficult. An earlier realization of all this is why I remained happy for years without telling anyone.

However, like murder, happiness "will out." Gradually, people began suspecting me, and, seven or eight years ago, a clergyman in Richland Center, Wisconsin, wrote asking if I would give him the five principal reasons for my state of mind. To my considerable surprise, in ten minutes I had jotted down fifty-one reasons, and then spent an hour trying to select the five best. I was like the woman in the Andersen fairy tale who consented to a rich man's adoption of one of her children, and then went from bed to bed, saying, "Not John; his hair is so soft, and he has such a lovely smile."

All of my fifty-one reasons, and of the forty-nine more I listed afterward, have lovely smiles. I suppose I should be apologetic for that. Long ago, Clarence Darrow wrote that "if a man is happy in America, it is considered that he is doing something wrong." And yet, at the risk of being called Pollyanna, I must admit that I have never been unhappy a whole hour of my life. This doesn't mean that I haven't been poor, or cold, or hungry, or afflicted with most of the other trials common to humanity, nor does it mean that I enjoyed, or enjoy, being cold or hungry. It means only that I have learned to regard what happens as up to me, and therefore, to believe that, when unpleasant things befall, I shall dig my way out. It means that I have learned to like *foie gras* and crackers and milk, and to be glad of either. It means that I keep healthy and occupied; that I am very keenly and constantly aware of the blessings I possess, and have developed an effective philosophy to cover those I lack or lose. Millions of sentences have been written about happiness, but this philosophy is not Plato's, or Emerson's, or William Lyon Phelps', but of my own making. In bad times, for example, I lean on four words.



They are foolish words, too—"Everything is always over" but, somehow, for me, they are more eloquent than Saint Theresa's "All things are passing," and I can't tell you how they have helped when I had a toothache or three lectures in the same day.

Somebody wrote somewhere that "one of the indictments of civilization is that happiness and intelligence are so rarely found in the same person." That indicts not only our civilization but our intelligence. I can understand the happiness of a man who doesn't think, but I can't understand the unhappiness of a man who does think. Thoughts are pleasant companions if we choose them as well as we should choose other company. That is, perhaps, the oldest truth in the world. Billy Phelps says "the happiest people are those who think the most interesting thoughts," but Emerson said it sixty years earlier, and the Bible hundreds of years before that, and Epictetus before the Bible. It is the man empty of thought—the man who must fill his life with gimcracks and excitements—who is most likely to be miserable. Take away his toys, or give someone else a toy that he lacks, and the nursery resounds with his lamentations. My neighbor's cook is wretched in the country because there are no movies, but I imagine Thoreau and Emerson didn't miss them at Walden Pond. On the very day one of my young friends complained that "nothing exciting ever happens here," the wise and charming wife of Artur Bodanzky, conductor at the Metropolitan Opera House, wrote me, "I do hope your summer has been devoid of excitements."

The reason advice about happiness is so unpopular, I think, is that much of it is academic and most of it bunk. Take, for example, the classic tale of the king who was to be cured of melancholia by wearing the shirt of an entirely happy man. East and West, North and South his emissaries searched, and, at last, they found their happy man, but he had no shirt. Well, that's okay if the weather was warm enough, but I doubt finding a happy shirtless, or coatless, or overcoatless man in these latitudes in December, and, if he were happy, it wouldn't be because he had no shirt, but in spite of it. The idea that anybody can be happy merely by lacking things is pure prune-juice. The idea that anybody can be happy merely by having them is equally prune-juice, of course, but it is simply silly to talk about beautiful thoughts, or the unimportance of

the material, to the penniless head of a hungry family. I'm afraid if I were that head it would be dangerous, as well.

The truth is that most of us are unhappy about nothing, through envy, or emptiness, or concentration upon small matters, or failure to apprehend and appreciate the joys all around us. To these, it ought to be possible to utter common sense with some helpfulness. It should be possible to explain that, in nine cases out of ten, or perhaps in ninety-nine out of a hundred, ill-health and unhappiness are a man's own fault, and that he, and he only, can do something about it. Most of our ills come of blaming someone else, and expecting someone else to help, and I never knew anyone in that state of mind who wasn't beyond help. The first essential to happiness is the ability to examine yourself, and say, "That's where I am wrong," or "That's what I ought to do." Of course, it's hard. I'm perfectly sure the reason Robinson Crusoe was so delighted with his Man Friday is that, before then, he had no one but himself to reproach when anything went wrong.

Not long ago, in a factory, I saw a tester pour water of the same temperature into two goblets; one broke, and the other didn't. "It's what's in the glass," he remarked; "not what you put into it." Just so, two of my friends reacted to the financial crash of 1929. Both of them had made a good deal of money rather quickly, and were using it as so many of us did in those days. Each had an expensive home and spent little time in it; they were always off to some road house for dinner, or running into town to buy things, or see a play, or go to a night club. When the bubble burst, both found themselves jobless and practically penniless. George and his wife had a sober talk, and moved into a cheap flat in New York. When I saw them last, they were busier and happier than ever before. George had got work as a salesman, and was earning enough for necessities. "Ruth and I have rediscovered each other," he told me. "We have learned to read again, too; we'd almost forgotten how much pleasure there is in a good book. Once or twice a week, we go to a concert or a museum—both free—and now I'm taking a night course in accounting because I think that's the way up with my firm." Charles, my other friend, is still bemoaning hard luck. He and Mrs. Charles have tried desperately to "keep up appearances"; they owe everybody, devise

dubious schemes for holding off creditors, and drink so much more than they used to that Charles recently felt the need of explaining. "It rounds the rough edges of life," he said, "and life's all rough edges now-a-days. You don't know; you're on top of it, but just take a licking once, and see how quickly your friends turn their backs, and how little you've left that's worth a damn."

With this pair in mind, it seems silly to regard happiness as the result of having money, or not having it. My experience is that it's equally silly to believe that happiness derives from having, or not having anything else. Recently, I devoted a winter to discussing the subject over the radio. For a time, our mail ran to nearly ten thousand letters a week, of which I saw two or three hundred. After reading the first sentences, I always knew why the writers were happy or unhappy, and I soon found that different people could be happy or unhappy under precisely the same conditions. One woman grew almost abusive at my suggestion that misery was partly of our own making. Like Charles, "What do you know about it?" she asked. "If you'd been crippled nine years, and poor, maybe you'd understand that life is a dirty deal for some of us." But at the same time, I kept getting the cheeriest letters from a man who, since the war, had been bedridden in an hospital maintained by the government. I sent him some cigarettes, and he wrote me, "More swell things keep happening to us out here!"

The question is whether there's any use talking to people about happiness. So many actually resent it, and are furious at being told that they themselves may have something to do with their own contentment or misery. Envisioning as nearly as possible an ideal State, our forefathers bespoke for us the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; the right to pursue happiness, not to have it provided, wrapped in cellophane, and laid in our laps. And if one is persuaded that happiness must be pursued, why shouldn't one say so? If I have had a vast experience in these parts, have caught a certain railway train every morning, and see you confused and frustrated at the station, mayn't I help by observing, "You're going the wrong way, brother; turn to your right, and run for it"? That's practical advice. If I were my friend Charles, and someone told me, "You should be glad you lost your money;

it is only the poor who are happy," I should think myself justified in hurling a ripe egg. But if I say to him, "Cocktail parties and night clubs aren't the only reasons for happiness; George, over there, is getting a lot of pleasure out of his books, and, if you don't like books, and can't learn to like 'em, why not try walking in the woods, or getting acquainted with your wife?"—why then I should think that quite possibly I might be doing Charlie a good turn.

I have had "experience in these parts," and, very honestly, if we may allude metaphorically to happiness as a railway train, I've caught it. This I write humbly, and gratefully, and from a full heart. Nearing sixty, I have but two real dejections—first, that days last only twenty-four hours, and, second, that it seems improbable that I shall live more than another forty years. I was entirely truthful when I declared that I have never been unhappy a whole hour. And when I added that I have been cold and hungry. I was very hungry most of a week forty years ago. I'd lost my position as drama critic on the *Washington Times*, and come to New York with a borrowed mileage book and just over \$3.00. Half of that had been paid in advance as the week's rent of a windowless, top-floor room at 34 West 38th Street. A number of trying things happened to me that week, during all of which I didn't get enough food to make one reasonable meal. Did I brim over with joy and satisfaction? I did not! Twice, I sat down on the handiest projection, and wept. But I can add truthfully that there never was a time in that seven days when I had the least doubt that my situation was temporary, or that I should lift myself out of it with colors flying and bands playing. "Everything is always over," I said, and went down to the waterfront to get a job taking crates for a ride from the street to the bowels of a ship.

I've had failures, too—dozens and dozens of 'em—and "lost" friends and "dear ones," and I haven't precisely enjoyed either experience. Did I forget the "dear ones" an hour after their death? Of course not. I merely learned that what one loves can't be lost, and discovered ways of keeping them with me. I found what I wanted to do in the world, and devoted ten or twelve hours a day to doing it. I cultivated interests, and tried to make what I desired simple and attainable. I learned to thank God for a glass of water, or a quiet room, or a sunset, or a plate of ham-and-eggs—all

of which, as aforesaid, doesn't mean that I'm not just as thankful for a glass of good wine or a dish of wild duck with olives at a restaurant in Paris. I can't say I'm "just as thankful" for a noisy room. I greatly dislike noise, and excitement, and parsnips, and a lot of other things I'm perfectly willing for you to have if you want 'em, and, if I must have 'em occasionally, why—"Everything is always over."

It is just possible, of course, that you are happy, or that you might become so without counsel from me. Most of us really have a lot better time than we think we do. I've always agreed with Josh Billings that "If you ever find happiness by hunting for it, you will find it as the old woman did her lost spectacles—on her own nose all the time."

### J. B. PRIESTLEY, 1894-

English novelist whose *The Good Companions* and *Angel Pavement* were popular successes

HAPPINESS IS DIFFICULT to define for many good reasons. One of them is that it is a term used very loosely. Another is that happiness being private every man has his own idea of it. His own standard, too.

For example, most of us would declare that Robert Louis Stevenson, for all his ill-health and struggles, must have been a happy man. Yet in a famous letter Stevenson himself wrote that he had been happy only once, at Hyères. We must assume, then, that either we are mistaken about Stevenson's nature or that his private standard of happiness differed from ours.

We may say that happiness is a vaguely defined territory of the spirit, lying somewhere between contentment on the one side and ecstasy on the other. These boundaries may help us to place happiness on our map.

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Now I would say that the secret of contentment is fulfilment. The contented being is the being that is able to realize its own nature and does not feel anywhere frustrated. At a time when people feel new needs in themselves, a hint of new powers, but find themselves still confined within the old limits, there will be universal discontent. As, I consider, there is to-day.

Ecstasy I believe to be a sudden sense of enlargement and expansion. Some people never experience it at all, simply because they are not capable of this sudden enlargement and expansion. Nobody has much of it, obviously, because a personality cannot be always suddenly enlarging itself and expanding.

There is something mysterious about ecstasy because there is something mysterious about the human spirit. We do not know very much about its resources and limits. When we are overwhelmed by natural beauty, by some great work of art, by some powerful creative idea, by love, we do not really know what is happening to us, where part of us has gone to, what we are in touch with, and in my opinion all the psychologists in the world together cannot tell us.

Life is mysterious, and ecstasy, following this strange enlargement and expansion of our essential beings, is not only part of this mystery, but also perhaps a profound clue to its secret.

Our happiness, then, lies somewhere between fulfilment (not in any large spiritual sense) and this expansion. It is more than contentment and less than ecstasy. We cannot be much more accurate because now the private standard enters into the question.

Some persons have an easy standard, and so have only to pass the borders of contentment to say they have achieved happiness. Other persons have to come within sight of ecstasy before they will admit to being happy. We have no right to dictate a standard to either party.

There are some people who plan their lives elaborately in order to achieve happiness. They have it all worked out, usually quite intelligently and tastefully: a little of this, then not too much of that, with a dash or two of the other; and all will be well.

The ancient Chinese, I understand, were like this; so were certain of the Greeks of the classic age; and the French too have this careful, ra-

tional, Epicurean outlook. Among our own contemporary authors, I imagine that Mr. Somerset Maugham would subscribe to this way of life.

That it has worked well with some people, that it has also produced much that is beautiful or wise, there can be no denying. But I will confess that I myself do not understand it.

There is, it seems to me, one fatal drawback. It increases self-consciousness, and so would seem to me to be turning its back on happiness. To carry out an elaborate programme in order to be happy appears to me to be saying good-bye to real happiness.

There you are, very aware of yourself, in the middle of the fine scheme, desperately wondering if you are happy. Whereas to me there is in happiness an element of self-forgetfulness. You lose yourself in something outside yourself when you are happy; just as when you are desperately miserable you are intensely conscious of yourself, are a solid little lump of ego weighing a ton.

I have been careful in the last paragraph to indicate that it is my own opinion I am putting forward, because there can be no doubt that this elaborate planning of happiness, this self-conscious tasting of existence, does work well for some natures.

It may be that here we have a fundamental difference of natures, and that it is possible for persons who have what we might call the Latin nature to be happy in a fashion impossible to persons more romantic in character. And clearly in this matter a man must speak for himself.

In some well-known lines Wordsworth once suggested that it was a deep flaw in a man's character because to him a yellow primrose was just a yellow primrose "and nothing more."

Since then Wordsworth himself has been severely criticized because he could not be content with a yellow primrose just being a yellow primrose. (It is significant, however, that this criticism did not come from persons who knew any more about wild flowers than Wordsworth did.)

In this matter I am by temperament a Wordsworthian. I am made happy by the primrose because at that moment it is a primrose and something more, a clue, a sign, a symbol. That is the kind of mind I have, and to be happy I must live richly in that mind.

This article is being written in the United States, where I have spent a good deal of time these last few years. Now the Americans, in spite of a temporary trade depression, should be leading happy lives, for they live in comparative security, with immense resources, a very high standard of material comfort and convenience, and with much to keep them entertained.

But I should not call them, at large, a happy people, and I suspect that many of them are not happy because they have lost the capacity for living richly in their minds. They suffer, these unhappy ones, from an interior emptiness, a mental and spiritual sterility.

If they were the gross materialists they are sometimes wrongly held to be, they would not suffer in this manner; but at heart many of them are romantic idealists who have somehow lost the way into the rich symbolic world of romantic idealism. Thus they are like a born pianist who has been deprived of the use of his fingers.

Some people—of whom I suspect Mr. Aldous Huxley to be one—can only be happy by doing without things. The pleasures of the senses seem to them to be the enemies of our real nature. Instead of tasting, like the Epicureans, they are for not touching at all, withdrawing, disdaining.

Here, again, I feel there is too much self-consciousness in the business for genuine happiness. When I do without, I am immensely conscious of myself doing without, and find myself bathed in a not very admirable glow of priggish virtue. That way, for me, neither salvation nor happiness lies. And here again it is probably a question of temperament.

I am not satisfied by a life in which a primrose is, a primrose and nothing more. On the other hand, I do not want a life in which you ignore a real primrose but meditate for hours on an imaginary one.

What satisfies me and makes for my happiness is a life filled with real primroses that are also more than primrose clues, signs, symbols. I like to enjoy material pleasures, but not as ends in themselves. Thus, both the gourmand and the ascetic seem to me equally wrong, to have both missed the point. And here, I think, women are much more sensible than men.

Most of them seem to perceive instinctively the right relation between the material and the spiritual, to understand that a thing can be enjoyed



both for itself and as yet another significant thread in the whole web of things.

The present is not a happy age. The Epicurean cannot find the peace and quiet necessary for his elaborate tasting of experience.

The ascetic finds himself surrounded by every form of self-indulgence. And the people who think and feel as I do—and I think this includes most of the Northern races—are apt to be confused and unhappy because they have been told so often that the primrose could not possibly mean anything more, though the very persons who assert this do not really know what a primrose is.

The very craze for speed is significant. People are dimly hoping that if they only go fast enough, they will find something significant somewhere. And so they may, but it will not be happiness.

### JEREMY TAYLOR, 1613-67

English bishop and devotional writer, distinguished as a preacher and as the author of some of the most noted religious works in English

To SECURE A contented spirit, measure your desires by your fortune, and not your fortune by your desires.

If men knew what felicity dwells in the cottage of a godly man, how sound he sleeps, how quiet his rest, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his position, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart, they would never admire the noises, the diseases, the throngs of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites that fill the house of the luxurious and the heart of the ambitious.

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# The Kingdom of Heaven



WILLIAM JAMES, 1842-1910

American philosopher and psychologist. His broad culture and cosmopolitan outlook made him the most influential thinker of his day.

. . . WE ARE ALL such helpless failures in the last resort. The sanest and best of us are of one clay with lunatics and prison inmates, and death finally runs the robustest of us down. And whenever we feel this, such a sense of the vanity and provisionality of our voluntary career comes over us that all our morality appears but as a plaster hiding a sore it can never cure, and all our well-doing as the hollowest substitute for that well-being that our lives ought to be grounded in, but, alas! are not.

And here religion comes to our rescue and takes our fate into her hands. There is a state of mind, known to religious men, but to no others, in which the will to assert ourselves and hold our own has been displaced by a willingness to close our mouths and be as nothing in the floods and waterspouts of God. In this state of mind, what we most dreaded has become the habitation of our safety, and the hour of our moral death has turned into our spiritual birthday. The time for tension in our soul is over, and that of happy relaxation, of calm deep breathing, of an eternal present, with no discordant future to be anxious about, has arrived. Fear is not held in abeyance as it is by mere morality, it is positively expunged and washed away.

. . . Like love, like wrath, like hope, ambition, jealousy, like every other instinctive eagerness and impulse, it adds to life an enchantment which is not rationally or logically deducible from anything else. This enchantment, coming as a gift when it does come,—a gift of our or-

From *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James. Reprinted by permission of Paul R. Reynolds and Son.

ganism, the physiologists will tell us, a gift of God's grace, the theologians say,—is either there or not there for us, and there are persons who can no more become possessed by it than they can fall in love with a given woman by mere word of command. Religious feeling is thus an absolute addition to the subject's range of life. It gives him a new sphere of power. When the outward battle is lost, and the outer world disowns him, it redeems and vivifies an interior world which otherwise would be an empty waste.

If religion is to mean anything definite for us, it seems to me that we ought to take it as meaning this added dimension of emotion, this enthusiastic temper of espousal, in regions where morality, strictly so called, can at best but bow its head and acquiesce. It ought to mean nothing short of this new reach of freedom for us, with the struggle over, the keynote of the universe sounding in our ears, and everlasting possession spread before our eyes.

This sort of happiness in the absolute and everlasting is what we find nowhere but in religion. . . .

### LEO N. TOLSTOY, 1828-1910

Russian author who ranks among the world's greatest writers. *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* are his two most popular books.

CHRIST REVEALS to us the truth. If the truth exists theoretically, it must exist practically. If life in God is happy and true, it must be so when applied to real life, for either real life is adaptable to the doctrine of Christ, or the doctrine of Christ is false.

Christ calls us from darkness to light, not from light to darkness. He pities men and treats them as lost sheep. To attract them He promises them a good shepherd and rich pasturage. Moreover, He warns His disciples that they will suffer for His doctrine, and He adjures them to be immovable. But He does not say that in following Him they will suffer more than in following the world. He says that the morals of

men make them unhappy, and that His disciples will find happiness.

It is very certain that this is Christ's teaching; the precision of His words, the general import of His doctrine, His life, and that of His disciples, are so many proofs of this.

It is easy to see that the disciples of Christ would be more happy than the men who share the morals of the world; the former, doing good, provoke no hatred; they are exposed only to the persecutions of the wicked. But to the partisans of the world the law of life is the law of struggle, and they devour each other. On the other hand, human trials are the same for all. But whereas the disciples of Christ endure them with calmness and judge them necessary, the disciples of the world rebel with all their might and do not know why they suffer.

Let each individual call up the painful moments of his life; let him remember his physical and moral sufferings; and let him ask himself in the name of what principles he has endured so many evils, in the spirit of Christ or in that of the world? Let any sincere man review the course of his existence; he will see that never has he suffered for having followed the doctrine of Christ, but that most of the misfortunes of his life arose from the fact that, resisting his conscience, he has followed the morals of the world.

In my life—a happy one from the world's standpoint—the amount of suffering that I have endured for the world would suffice to make a martyr for Christ. All the vices that have stained my life, beginning with the drunkenness and debauchery of my student days and ending with the duels, diseases, and the abnormal and painful conditions in which I struggle, all these constitute a martyrdom offered as a sacrifice upon the altar of the world.

And I speak only of my own personal life—an exceptionally fortunate one in the world's view. How many victims of the world there are whose sufferings I cannot imagine!

We are persuaded that the misfortunes of which we are the cause are the normal conditions of life. Consequently, we cannot understand that Christ tells us to free ourselves from evil and live happy.

Go through a crowd of people—preferably of city people—examine these tired, anxious, wasted faces; remember your life and the lives of

the men whom you have known intimately; recall the violent deaths, the suicides, of which you have heard, and ask yourself the reason of all this death, suffering and despair. And you will see, however strange it may appear, that the cause of nine tenths of human suffering is the present life of the world, that this suffering is useless, that it could be avoided, and that the majority of men are martyrs to worldly ideas.

Recently, on a rainy autumn Sunday, I crossed the market near the tower of Soukharev in a street-car. For a third of a mile the car made its way through a dense crowd that closed in again behind us. From morning till evening these thousands of men, most of them hungry and in rags, jostle each other in the mud, dispute, deceive and hate each other. The same thing goes on in all the markets of Moscow and other cities. These men will pass their evenings in the wine-shops, and afterward will seek their holes and corners. Sunday is their best day. Monday they begin again their accursed existence.

Think of the existence of these men, of the situation which they abandon and of that which they choose. Consider the labor to which they give themselves, and you will see that they are martyrs!

All have left their fields, their houses, their fathers and brothers, often their wives and children. They have renounced everything and come to the city in order to acquire that which the world considers necessary. All of them are there, from the operative, the coachman, the seamstress and the prostitute, to the wealthy merchant, the office-holder, and the wives of all of them, to say nothing of the tens of thousands of unfortunates who have lost everything and live on scraps and brandy in the free lodging-houses.

Go through this crowd; watch poor and rich alike; look for a man who says that he is satisfied and believes that he possesses what the world deems necessary; you will not find one in a thousand.

One of the first conditions of happiness admitted by all, is the integrity of the bond that connects man with nature—that is, sunlight, free air, fields, plants, animals. Everywhere and always men have considered it a misfortune to be deprived of these things. It is this deprivation which the prisoner feels most keenly.

See now the existence of the men who live according to the world's rules. The higher their position in the world, the more they are deprived of this condition of happiness. . . . Most of them—almost all the women—attain old age without having seen the dawn, the fields and the forests more than once or twice in their lives, except through a car window; without ever having planted a seed, or raised a cow or a horse or a hen, without even knowing how animals are born, grow and live. . . . Wherever they go, they are deprived of this happiness of nature, just as the prisoners are. And as the prisoners console themselves with the sight of the grass growing in the prison-yard, and the furtive passage of a spider or a little mouse, so these men console themselves with the enjoyment of sickly hothouse plants and the society of a parrot, a little dog or a monkey, and even these are reared and fed by mercenaries.

Another condition of happiness is labor; labor performed voluntarily; labor in harmony with one's tastes; physical labor, which gives appetite and deep and restful sleep. Now, the more enviable a man's situation in the world's eyes, the more foreign it is to this second condition of happiness. All the fortunate of earth—the office-holders and the rich—are deprived of all physical labor. They struggle, but in vain, against the diseases which are the result of this deprivation, and against the ennui which preys upon them. I say that their struggle is vain, for labor is healthy only when it is necessary. Men of the world perform labor which they hate, such as that of bankers, lawyers, etc. I say that they hate it, because never have I found a man among them all who felt a pleasure in his work equal to that enjoyed by the janitor when cleaning his sidewalk of snow. All these fortunate people, who are either deprived of labor or forced to perform labor which they detest, are precisely in the situation of convicts.

The family is the third indispensable condition of happiness. Again, the higher a man has risen in the world, the less he knows of this happiness. Most men of the world are adulterers, who knowingly and wilfully reject the joys of the fireside. They deprive themselves of the joy of living with their children; for their principles tell them to confide them to others. The children, from their youth, are as unhappy as their

fathers, and cherish for them no feeling save a desire for their death in order to enjoy their property. It is astonishing to hear parents justify themselves by the following reasoning: "I need nothing, life is a burden to me, but I live and act for my children." That is to say: "I know by my own experience that our life is unhappy; consequently, I bring up my children to be as unhappy as I am. For love of them I bring them to cities physically and morally infected; I intrust them to the hands of foreigners who have an eye to their own interests in the education which they give them; and I conscientiously corrupt my children morally and intellectually."

The fourth condition of happiness is in free and kindly commerce with all men. But here again the men of the world are deprived of this essential condition of happiness. The higher one rises, the narrower is the circle of one's relations, whereas to the peasant and his wife entire humanity is accessible. . . .

Finally, a fifth condition of happiness is health, and death unaccompanied by suffering. Here again we find no happiness in the world's higher spheres. Take, on the one hand, a man of average wealth and his wife; on the other, an average peasant and his wife. Compare their lives, and you will see that, in spite of the privations and excessive toil endured by the peasant, the health of men and women is inversely proportional to the height of their rank in the social scale. In the upper classes a man so healthy that he does not need to seek the periodical summer cure is as great a rarity as an invalid among the working-men. . . . All these fortunate people are bald and toothless at an age when the peasant is at the height of his power. All suffer from diseases of the nerves, of the stomach, and of other organs damaged by drunkenness, debauchery and medical treatment. Those who do not die young spend half their lives in injecting morphine into their systems; they become pitiable cripples, incapable of enjoyment, and live as parasites like those ants that are fed by their slaves. See how they die; this one blows his brains out, that one succumbs to unmentionable diseases. One after another, all perish victims to the life that prevails in the world. And crowds of men follow them, seeking, like the martyrs, suffering and annihilation.

Entire existences throw themselves under the car of Moloch; the car passes over and crushes them, and fresh victims take their places beneath the wheels, with curses on their lips! . . .

But formerly, it is answered, there were martyrs to the doctrine of Christ. The fact is exceptional. In 1,800 years, 380,000 people suffered voluntary or involuntary martyrdom in the cause of Christ. Count now the martyrs to the world. You will see that for one martyr to Christ there are a thousand martyrs to the world—martyrs whose sufferings have been a hundred times more cruel. In the wars of the present century alone, 30,000,000 men have been killed.

Now, these were all martyrs to the world, for if humanity were to follow the teaching of Christ, men would not kill each other. When man shall have ceased to believe in those ideas of the world which impose upon him the use of needless feathers, watch-chains and drawing-rooms; when he shall be persuaded of the necessity of avoiding the stupidities which the world exacts, he will no longer know suffering, or constant anxiety, or labor that brings no rest and has no object. He will no longer deprive himself of nature, of that labor which is to his liking, of his family, of his health; he will no longer die a degrading or a painful death.

### BLAISE PASCAL, 1623-62

French philosopher, scientist and mystic. He invented a calculating machine and was the author of the celebrated *Pensées* and *Provincial Letters*.

THERE ARE ONLY three kinds of persons; those who serve God, having found Him; others who are occupied in seeking Him, not having found Him; while the remainder live without seeking Him, and without having found Him. The first are reasonable and happy, the last are foolish and unhappy; those between are unhappy and reasonable.



## SAINT AUGUSTINE, 354-430

Doctor of the Church and one of the four Latin fathers. His best known works are his *Confessions* and *City of God*.

WHERE, THEN, AND when did I experience my happy life, that I should remember, and love, and long for it? Nor is it I alone, or some few besides, but we all would fain be happy; which, unless by some certain knowledge we know, we should not with so certain a will desire. But how is this, that if two men be asked whether they would go to the wars, one, perchance would answer that he would, the other, that he would not; but if they were asked whether they would be happy, both would instantly without any doubting say they would; and for no other reason would the one go to the wars, and the other not, but to be happy. Is it perchance that as one looks for his joy in this thing, another in that, all agree in their desire of being happy, as they would (if they were asked) that they wished to have joy, and this joy they call a happy life? Although, then, one obtains this joy by one means, another by another, all have one end, which they strive to attain, namely, joy. Which being a thing which all must say they have experienced, it is therefore found in the memory, and recognized whenever the name of a happy life is mentioned.

Far be it, Lord, far be it from the heart of Thy servant who here confesseth unto Thee, far be it, that, be the joy what it may, I should therefore think myself happy. For there is a joy which is not given to the ungodly, but to those who love Thee for Thine own sake, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is the happy life, to rejoice to Thee, of Thee, for Thee; this is it, and there is no other. For they who think there is another, pursue some other and not the true joy. Yet is not their will turned away from some semblance of joy?

It is not certain then that all wish to be happy, inasmuch as they who

wish not to joy in Thee, which is the only happy life, do not truly desire the happy life. Or do all men desire this, but because the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, that they cannot do what they would, they fall upon that which they can, and are content therewith; because, what they are not able to do, they do not will so strongly as would suffice to make them able? For I ask any one, had he rather joy in truth, or in falsehood? They will as little hesitate to say "in the truth," as to say "that they desire to be happy," for a happy life is joy in the truth: for this is a joying in Thee, who art the Truth, O God my Light, health of my countenance, my God. This is the happy life which all desire; this life which alone is happy, all desire; to joy in the truth all desire. I have met with many that would deceive; who would be deceived, no one. Where then did they know this happy life, save where they knew the truth also? For they love it also, since they would not be deceived. And when they love a happy life, which is no other than joying in the truth, then also do they love the truth; which yet they would not live, were there not some notice of it in their memory. Why then joy they not in it? Why are they not happy? because they are more strongly taken up with the other things which have more power to make them miserable, than that which they so faintly remember to make them happy. For there is yet a little light in men; let them walk, let them walk, that the darkness overtake them not.

But why doth "truth generate hatred," and the man of thine, preaching the truth become an enemy to them? whereas a happy life is loved, which is nothing else but joying in the truth; unless that truth is in that kind loved, that they who love anything else would gladly have that which they love to be the truth: and because they would not be deceived, would not be convinced that they are so? Therefore do they hate the truth for that thing's sake which they love instead of the truth. They love truth when she enlightens, they hate her when she reproves. For since they would not be deceived, and would deceive, they love her when she discovers herself unto them, and hate her when she discovers them. Whence she shall so repay them, that they who would not be made manifest by her, she doth against their will make manifest,

and herself becometh not manifest unto them. Thus, thus, yea thus doth the mind of man, thus blind and sick, foul and ill-favoured, wish to be hidden, but that aught should be hidden from it, it wills not. But the contrary is requited it, that itself should not be hidden from the Truth; but the Truth is hid from it. Yet even thus miserable, it had rather joy in truths than in falsehoods. Happy then will it be, when no distraction interposing, it shall joy in that only Truth, by Whom all things are true.

### ZOROASTER, 660(?)–583(?) B.C.

The prophet of ancient Iran or Persia. His religion, Zoroastrianism, was probably the result of a thoroughgoing reform of the native religion of Persia.

O WISE ONE! Through thy prudent most beneficent spirit may a man, according to his desire for bliss, win for himself bliss; which blessings of good purpose thou shalt give, together with the joy of long life, through justice, for all days! Bliss shall flee from them who despise righteousness. In such wise ye destroy for yourselves the spiritual life. Holiness is the best of all good. It is also happiness. Happy is the man who is holy with perfect holiness.

### THOMAS À KEMPIS, 1379(?)–1471

German monk, whose *Imitation of Christ* has been a fount of inspiration for centuries

THOU ART MISERABLE wheresoever thou art, and whithersoever thou turnest, unless thou turn thee to God. Why art thou disquieted because it happeneth not to thee according to thy wishes and desires? Who is

he that hath everything according to his will? Neither I, nor thou, nor any man upon the earth. There is no man in the world free from trouble or anguish, though he were King or Pope. Who is he who hath the happiest lot? Even he who is strong to suffer somewhat for God.

There are many foolish and unstable men who say, "See what a prosperous life that man hath, how rich and how great he is, how powerful, how exalted." But lift up thine eyes to the good things of heaven, and thou shalt see that all these worldly things are nothing, they are utterly uncertain, yea, they are wearisome, because they are never possessed without care and fear. The happiness of man lieth not in the abundance of temporal things but a moderate portion sufficeth him. Our life upon earth is verily wretchedness. The more a man desireth to be spiritual, the more bitter doth the present life become to him; because he the better understandeth and seeth the defects of human corruption. For to eat, to drink, to watch, to sleep, to rest, to labour, and to be subject to the other necessities of nature, is truly a great wretchedness and affliction to a devout man, who would fain be released and free from all sin.

For the inner man is heavily burdened with the necessities of the body in this world. Wherefore the prophet devoutly prayeth to be freed from them, saying, Deliver me from my necessities, O Lord. But woe to those who know not their own misery, and yet greater woe to those who love this miserable and corruptible life. For to such a degree do some cling to it (even though by labouring or begging they scarce procure what is necessary for subsistence) that if they might live here always, they would care nothing for the Kingdom of God.

Oh foolish and faithless of heart, who lie buried so deep in worldly things that they relish nothing save the things of the flesh! Miserable ones! they will too sadly find out at the last, how vile and worthless was that which they loved. The saints of God and all loyal friends of Christ held as nothing the things which pleased the flesh, or those which flourished in this life, but their whole hope and affection aspired to the things which are above. Their whole desire was borne upwards to everlasting and invisible things, lest they should be drawn downwards by the love of things visible.

Lose not, brother, thy loyal desire of progress to things spiritual. There

is yet time, the hour is not past. Why wilt thou put off thy resolution? Arise, begin this very moment, and say, "Now is the time to do: now is the time to fight, now is the proper time for amendment." When thou art ill at ease and troubled, then is the time when thou art nearest unto blessing. Thou must go through fire and water that God may bring thee into a healthy place. Unless thou put force upon thyself, thou wilt not conquer thy faults. So long as we carry about with us this frail body, we cannot be without sin, we cannot live without weariness and trouble. Gladly would we have rest from all misery; but because through sin we have lost innocence, we have lost also the true happiness. Therefore must we be patient, and wait for the mercy of God, until this tyranny be over-past, and this mortality be swallowed up of life.

O how great is the frailty of man, which is ever prone to evil! To-day thou confessest thy sins, and to-morrow thou committest again the sins thou didst confess. Now dost thou resolve to avoid a fault, and within an hour thou behavest thyself as if thou hadst never resolved at all. Good cause have we therefore to humble ourselves, and never to think highly of ourselves, seeing that we are so frail and unstable. And quickly may that be lost by our negligence, which by much labour was hardly attained through grace.

What shall become of us at the end, if at the beginning we are lukewarm and idle? Woe unto us, if we choose to rest, as though it were a time of peace and security, while as yet no sign appeareth in our life of true holiness. Rather had we need that we might begin yet afresh, like good novices, to be instructed unto good living, if haply there might be hope of some future amendment and greater spiritual increase.

## JOHN WESLEY, 1703-91

English evangelical preacher, founder of Methodism. During his later years he met with reverent admiration and affection in place of the buffeting, ridicule and rejection of earlier days.

AS THERE IS but one God in heaven above and in the earth beneath—so there is only one happiness for created spirits, either in heaven or earth. This one God made our heart for himself; and it cannot rest, till it resteth in him. It is true, that while we are in the vigour of youth and health; while our blood dances in our veins; while the world smiles upon us, and we have all the conveniences, yea, and superfluities of life, we frequently have pleasing dreams, and enjoy a kind of happiness. But it cannot continue; it flies away like a shadow; and even while it does, it is not solid or substantial; it does not satisfy the soul. We still pant after something else, something which we have not. Give a man every thing that this world can give, still, as Horace observed near two thousand years ago

*Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.*

Still—

Amidst our plenty something still,  
To me, to thee, to him is wanting!

That something is neither more nor less, than the knowledge and love of God; without which no spirit can be happy either in heaven or earth.

Permit me to recite my own experience, in confirmation of this: I distinctly remember, that, even in my childhood, even when I was at school, I have often said, "They say, the life of a school boy is the happiest in the world: but I am sure, I am not happy: for I am not content; and so cannot be happy." When I had lived a few years longer, being in the vigour of youth, a stranger to pain and sickness, and particularly

to lowness of spirits (which I do not remember to have felt one quarter of an hour ever since I was born); having plenty of all things, in the midst of sensible and amiable friends, who loved me, and I loved them, and being in the way of life, which of all others, suited my inclinations; still I was not happy. I wondered why I was not, and could not imagine what the reason was. The reason certainly was, I did not know God, the source of present as well as eternal happiness. What is a clear proof that I was not then happy, is, that upon the coolest reflection, I knew not one week which I would have thought it worth while to have lived over again; taking it with every inward and outward sensation, without any variation at all.

But a pious man affirms, "When I was young I was happy; though I was utterly without God in the world." I do not believe you: though I doubt not but you believe yourself. But you are deceived, as I have been over and over. Such is the condition of human life:—

Flowrets and myrtles fragrant seem to rise:

All is at distance fair; but near at hand,

The gay deceit mocks the desiring eyes

With thorns, and desert heath, and barren sands.

Look forward on any distant prospect: how beautiful does it appear! Come up to it; and the beauty vanishes away; and it is rough and disagreeable. Just so is life. But when the scene is past, it resumes its former appearance; and we seriously believe, that we were then very happy, though, in reality, we were far otherwise. For as none is now, so none ever was happy, without the loving knowledge of the true God.

We may learn hence, secondly, that this happy knowledge of the true God is only another name for religion. . . . Religion, as to the nature or essence of it, does not lie in this or that set of notions, vulgarly called faith; nor in a round of duties, however carefully reformed from error and superstition. It does not consist in any number of outward actions. No: it properly and directly consists in the knowledge and love of God, as manifested in the Son of his love, through the eternal Spirit. And this naturally leads to every heavenly temper, and to every good word and work.

. . . A glutton, a drunkard, a gamester, may be merry; but he cannot be happy. The beau, the belle, may eat and drink, and rise up to play; but still they feel they are not happy. Men or women may adorn their own dear persons with all the colors of the rainbow. They may dance, and sing, and hurry to and fro, and flutter hither and thither. They may roll up and down in their splendid carriages, and talk insipidly to each other. They may hasten from one diversion to another: but happiness is not there. They are still "walking in a vain shadow, and disquieting themselves in vain." One of their own poets has truly pronounced, concerning the whole life of these sons of pleasure:

'Tis a dull farce, an empty show:  
Powder, and pocket glass, and beau.

I cannot but observe of that fine writer, that he came near the mark; and yet fell short of it. In his "Solomon" (one of the noblest poems in the English tongue), he clearly shows where happiness is not; that it is not to be found in natural knowledge, in power, or in the pleasures of sense or imagination. But he does not show where it is to be found. He could not; for he did not know it himself. Yet he came near it, when he said,

Restore, great Father, thy instructed son;  
And in my act may thy great will be done!

. . . If, as was observed above, religion is happiness, every one that has it must be happy. This appears from the very nature of the thing: for if religion and happiness are in fact the same, it is impossible that any man can possess the former, without possessing the latter also. He cannot have religion without having happiness; seeing they are utterly inseparable.

Are not you a living proof of this? Do not you still wander to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none?—Pursuing happiness, but never overtaking it? And who can blame you for pursuing it? It is the very end of your being. The great Creator made nothing to be miserable, but every creature to be happy in its kind. And upon a general review of



the works of his hands, he pronounced them all very good; which they would not have been, had not every intelligent creature, yea, every one capable of pleasure and pain, been happy in answering the end of its creation. If you are now unhappy, it is because you are in an unnatural state: and shall you not sigh for deliverance from it? "The whole creation" being now "subject to vanity, groaneth and travaileth in pains together." I blame you only, or pity you rather, for taking a wrong way to a right end: for seeking happiness where it never was, and never can be found. You seek happiness in your fellow creatures, instead of your Creator. But these can no more make you happy, than they can make you immortal. If you have ears to hear, every creature cries aloud, "Happiness is not in me." All these are, in truth, "broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Oh turn unto your rest! Turn to him, in whom are hid all the treasures of happiness! Turn unto him, "who giveth liberally unto all men," and he will give you "to drink of the water of life freely."

You cannot find your long sought happiness in all the pleasures of the world. Are they not "deceitful upon the weights"? Are they not lighter than vanity itself? How long will ye "feed upon that which is not bread?" Which may amuse, but cannot satisfy. You cannot find it in the religion of the world: either in opinions, or a mere round of outward duties. Vain labor! Is not God a Spirit? and therefore to be "worshipped in spirit and in truth"? In this alone can you find the happiness you seek; in the union of your spirit with the Father of spirits; in the knowledge and love of him who is the fountain of happiness, sufficient for all the souls he has made.

But where is he to be found? Shall we go up into heaven, or down into hell to seek him? "Shall we take the wings of the morning," and search for him "in the uttermost part of the sea?" Nay, *Quod petis, hic est!* What a strange word to fall from the pen of a heathen! "What you seek, is here!" He is "about your bed." He is "about your path." He "besets you behind and before." He "lays his hand upon you." Lo! God is here! not afar off. Now, believe and feel him near! May he now reveal himself in your heart! Know him! Love him! and you are happy.

Are you already happy in him? then see that you "hold fast where-

unto ye have attained!" "Look unto yourselves, that ye lose not what ye have gained, but that ye receive a full reward." In so doing, expect a continual growth in grace, in the loving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Expect that the power of the Highest shall suddenly overshadow you, that all sin may be destroyed, and nothing may remain in your heart, but holiness unto the Lord. And this moment, and every moment, "present yourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God," and "glorify him with your body and with your spirit, which are God's!"

He is happy in knowing there is a God, an intelligent Cause and Lord of all, and that he is not the produce either of blind chance or inexorable necessity. He is happy in the full assurance he has that this Creator and End of all things is a Being of boundless wisdom, of infinite power to execute all the designs of his wisdom, and of no less infinite goodness to direct all his power to the advantage of all his creatures. Nay, even the consideration of his immutable justice, rendering to all their due, of his unspotted holiness, of his all-sufficiency in himself, and of that immense ocean of all perfections which centre in God from eternity to eternity, is a continual addition to the happiness of a Christian.

A farther addition is made thereto, while, in contemplating even the things that surround him, that thought strikes warmly upon his heart,—

These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good!

while he takes knowledge of the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and wisdom in the things that are seen, the heavens, the earth, the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field. How much more, while, rejoicing in the constant care which he still takes of the work of his own hand, he breaks out, in a transport of love and praise, "O Lord our Governor, how excellent are thy ways in all the earth! Thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!" While he, as it were, sees the Lord sitting upon his throne, and ruling all things well; while he observes the general providence of God, coextended with his whole creation, and surveys all the effects of it in the heavens and earth, as a well-pleased spectator; while he sees the wisdom and goodness of his general

government descending to every particular, so presiding over the whole universe as over a single person, so watching over every single person as if he were the whole universe; how does he exult when he reviews the various traces of the Almighty goodness, in what has befallen himself in the several circumstances and changes of his own life! All which he now sees have been allotted to him, and dealt out in number, weight, and measure. With what triumph of soul, in surveying either the general or particular providence of God, does he observe every line pointing out a hereafter, every scene opening into eternity!

He is peculiarly and inexpressibly happy, in the clearest and fullest conviction, "This all powerful, all wise, all gracious Being, this Governor of all loves me. This Lover of my soul is always with me, is never absent, no, not for a moment. And I love him: there is none in heaven but thee, none on earth that I desire besides thee! And he has given me to resemble himself; he has stamped his image on my heart. And I live unto him; I do only his will; I glorify him with my body and my spirit. And it will not be long before I shall die unto him; I shall die into the arms of God. And then farewell sin and pain; then it only remains that I should live with him forever."

### HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL, 1821-81

Swiss poet and philosopher. His famous *Journal* won the enthusiastic admiration of Matthew Arnold, and has been widely read.

TO BE HAPPY, to possess eternal life, to be in God, to be saved, all these are the same. All alike mean the solution of the problem, the aim of existence. And happiness is cumulative. Happiness has no limits, because God has neither bottom nor bounds, and because happiness is nothing but the conquest of God through love.

To become divine is then the aim of life: then only can truth be said to be ours beyond the possibility of loss, because it is no longer outside

us, nor even in us, but we are it, and it is we; we ourselves are a truth, a will, a work of God. Liberty has become nature; the creature is one with its creator—one through love. It is what it ought to be; its education is finished, and its final happiness begins. The sun of time declines and the light of eternal blessedness arises.















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